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SKETCHES OF CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS.

No. I.

THERE are some people who believe our age to infinitely, the most important the world has ever known, that their opinions and boastings might well put us in mind of Voltaire's 'un homme tel que moi.' It is after the fashion of that worthy's remarks on his own dignity, that we constantly hear the present century applauded by its minions; and half the speeches at county dinners, and leading articles in daily newspapers, are filled with ejaculations in the name of the nineteenth century—'Un siècle tel que moi.'

There are others whose interest leads them to laud the wisdom of our ancestors as something altogether super-human. But these are not the only persons who cast longing looks behind them, and who delight to lose the present among the shadowy mazes of a far antiquity. The gradual deterioration of the world and its inhabitants was a favourite theory with an elder generation than ours; and while we feel all the inconveniences of the passing hour, and turn our eyes only to the treasures, and glories, and prominent lights of antiquity, it is not very wonderful that we are somewhat inclined to prefer the historical to the actual, and to take refuge in fancy, from our personal annoyances, amid the calm and lofty deliciousness of the by-gone day.

Both parties are probably mistaken. The same capacities exist at all times among men; but there certainly never has been a state of society which would permit the development of those capacities in any thing like the perfection which they are destined to arrive at hereafter. Our own time has reached, in every thing connected with the senses, a degree of excellence which probably was not foreseen by any ancient philosopher. The powers of matter have been explored, and applied in a thousand varieties of ways, which, convenient, interesting, and beautiful as they are, yet seem to be only an early step in an illimitable progression. It may be doubted, however, whether we have advanced at all proportionably in those higher and interior qualities which are of infinitely more importance towards the perfection of each individual nature, but display themselves far less definitely by outward and calculable manifestations.

Whatsoever may be the mechanical advantages, or the social condition of a people, the same mighty principles of moral advancement, the same germs of truth and love, though often slumbering and torpid, yet live eternally in the hearts of the people. A large portion of this innate good has uniformly been developed among the greatest writers of every country. It is one of the primary elements of genius, and, perhaps, the most essential. To trace its appearance in the literature of any land or period, and to examine the mode in which it has moulded and assimilated to itself the forms which are the outgrowth and characteristic peculiarities of the people and the time, is an efficacious and delightful mode of throwing out into vigorous exertion the most precious qualities of our own minds. But to search, in this way, into the most remarkable intellects of our own day and country, and to know, with a learned spirit, the qualities of the masters of our generation, bears with it a more direct and obvious benefit; for though it be perfectly certain that the man of the highest genius is he in whom there is

most of the eternal and the universal, of those qualities which are independent of climates and centuries, and government and education, which lend their power to the forms through which they show themselves, instead of resting on those forms for their success; yet it is also certain, that when genius has breathed into these lifeless shapes and idols the breath of its nostrils, they assume a reality, and seem to move with an independent life, whereby we learn more of their origin and purport than from a thousand minute delineations of details and peculiarities, not informed by this inspiration. The man, moreover, of the mightiest energies and sympathies will uniformly imbue with his own mind and rule, for his own purposes, all that is merely formal and accidental in the state of things to which he belongs. He will not reject the aid of the implements which are scattered round him; but he will wield them to his own purposes, and with a power unknown to those whose hands first shaped and employed them; and thus it is, that in studying the minds and works of great writers, we arrive at a deeper and more living knowledge of the epoch to which we belong, than if we looked, however widely, over its surface, or mined, however long and darkly, in its inmost caves. It is, moreover, in the writings of such men, that we arrive at the most precise acquaintance with the general and permanent causes which, even around our daily paths, are moulding and inspiring the whole mass of that society, whereof ourselves are portions.

There is much, also, to be learned from the examination even of those inferior, though still in some degree remarkable, men, who often enjoy, for a season, a larger share of popularity and vulgar applause than wiser and more pregnant intellects. But, in every study of this kind, the great point to be kept in view is this: viz. that the examination of individual character, as well as every other species of human research, is only valuable inasmuch as it assists the workings of the spirit of truth within us. The light pursuits of the most frivolous, the elaborate inquiries of cumbrous erudition, the experiments of the man of science, the perils and labours of the pilgrims of knowledge, all are equally contemptible and worthless, except as assistances towards the nourishing into consciousness those general principles, the obscure records of wisdom, the lines of eternal truth, originally traced upon our minds, however faint and dim, by the hand of Him who is at once all wisdom and all truth. Of this knowledge, after the secrets of our own being have become manifest to our eyes, it is most important to us, as agents and instruments of good, to become acquainted with the state of custom, and feeling, and thought, among those around us.

To every portion of mankind, to every age, has been assigned its peculiar character. There are national as well as individual idiosyncracies; and different races are no less distinguished by the variety of their arms and dresses—the Roman sword, the Gothic lance, the Indian tomahawk—than by the distinctive features of their customs, opinions, and modes of feeling. We catch a glimpse of human society shadowed afar off among the dim outlines of tents and camels, and the flocks of patriarchs, and the palm-trees of Arabia. The stamp of conquest, and the records of priestly tyranny, are exhibited, broad and deep, among the fearful gradations of castes, the stupendous monuments and pretended theocracy of Egypt, Etruria, and Hindoostan. The very name of Greece calls

up the image of the sun-lit city, with the music, the dances, the pageants, and the songs of its theatres; the perfection of human vigour displayed in the Palæstra, in shapes of an almost ideal beauty; the temples and the statues, the lovely phantasms of a poetical religion; the impassioned throng around the bema of the orator, and the eloquent meditations of a noble philosophy. The grave and simple unity of Roman forms, which made the city a camp, and the camp a temple, the lictors and the curule chair—the outward dress of a system in which every thing was included under positive institutions, are no less distinct from the barbaric magnificence and startling contrasts of the fiery East, than from the rough, unorganized energy of the Teutonic tribes, the forest domain, the herds and huts, the irregular council and naked array of the Hercynian wilderness. Again, another era presents to us the very busy marts of Bruges, and the crowded manufactories of Florence; the innumerable fortresses of feudal Germany, with their buttresses of rock, and thier men of iron; the tribunals of love, the troubadours and jongleurs, in the palaces of Thoulouse; the astrolabe and sigil, the tournament and bull-fight of Granada; with the horrible extravagances of crusades, and the elaborate follies of scholastic logic.

It may seem to some the result of a severe wisdom, to say that these are all recollections striking indeed to the fancy, for this, at least, will be allowed by every one, but without the slightest pretension to any substantial value. Yet these things are all symptoms of the particular forms under which human nature subsisted at certain epochs, and in various modes of society. These epochs and modes of national existence, were each of them as marked in their own individual being as are single men.

This is very remarkably true of the present age of European society. The latter portion of the eighteenth century was the beginning of a new era, which is even yet but in its earlier stages. It is difficult to form even a faint and vague conception of the mighty events and incalculable revolutions which its progress is destined to unfold. Who is there who can venture to affirm, that we ourselves shall not be the spectators of changes, more startling, widely-spreading, and permanently important, than all the shatterings of thrones, the convulsions of governments, the earthquake shocks of universal opinion, or even than that wondrous regeneration of literature, which has so suddenly begun to enlarge the prospects of mankind, and has so astounded the exclusive worshippers of the dead and mouldering past?

We can foresee little of the future; but still we can see something: and we should be madmen or idiots to close our eyes, and shut up the volumes of divination, while that great movement is bearing onward the whole world, by which we, too, must be swept along. The signs of the times are around us, many and various, and prominent: but we find them, above all, in the writings of those men, some of whom are even now so powerfully influencing society, while others are treasures reserved and hoarded up for the benefit of, perhaps, a distant futurity. We therefore propose to examine those minds of our own day, which are the most conspicuous in literature, for good or for evil; and though we are well aware that we can employ but very inadequate means, yet we hope we may venture to assert, that our pen will be guided by no feeling but the free love of truth.

LEDYARD'S LIFE AND TRAVELS.

Memoirs of the Life and Travels of JOHN LEDYARD, from his Journals and Correspondence.—(American Edition, just received for republication in England.)

THE principal charm of biography to nine readers out of ten, lies hidden under an imperfect idea of its real purpose and utility. The actions of an individual are but the outward signs of an inward mystery, which it is the true aim of philosophy to investigate; and people and nations, in their varying circumstances and aspects, are a mighty temple, covered over with hieroglyphics, which, in their concealed meaning, reveal the secret of its building, and the wonders of its inner chambers. A book of memoirs, as people usually read such works, is less useful, and infinitely less amusing, than a moderately good novel. It is seldom the real incidents of life, taken one with the other, and in connection with their causes, afford more than a few startling deviations from the ordinary course of existence, or, if they did, could be presented in a manner at once consistent with truth and the design of continued interest and effect. The advantage, therefore, which a real narrative possesses over an imaginary one, in having facts instead of fictions for its incidents, consists in their affording some higher gratification than the satisfaction of curiosity, and in their better adaptation to call the mind into action.

The elements of our human nature, though the same in all men, are combined in such different proportions, and cast at first into vessels differing so much in mould and temper, that every individual of the species is a study in himself. But there are properties and peculiarities of nature which are either not often present or not often developed; qualities of mind and disposition the discovery of which seems to extend the limits of humanity, gives us new and different ideas of our kind, and makes us deem man something more than we before thought man to be. It is not the history of one class of characters alone, or that of the most brilliant and most popular only that affords opportunities for observation of this kind; the greatest minds are not often measurable by inferior ones, and are not always in possession of opportunities of acting; but the skill of Archimedes was not the less because he had not where to fix his lever. The objects to be contemplated are mind and character; and as these, when worthy of admiration, depend not on the accidents of fortune or adversity, to search rightly after the golden treasures that lie beneath the surface of the moral world, we must be content to labour while others are rejoicing in the possession of supposed treasures. There is, however, a pleasure to be derived from the contemplation of human character, when elevated above its ordinary level, afforded by few other studies, and which well repays the endeavour to divest ourselves of vulgar prejudices and narrow estimates of truth. Confined to no age, and restricted to no one pursuit, the indwelling spirit of pure and noble thought, teaching some to suffer, and others to body forth its own magnificent inspirations, or act under its guidance, is to be sought for under every form of its existence, and to be the object of our veneration wherever found; in the devotedness of the patriot, as well as in the eloquence of the bard; in the patient, bold, and self-denying enthusiasm of the traveller, as well as in the successful science of the philosopher or moralist.

It would be difficult, we think, for any one to read the volume on our table without such reflections as these. The subject of its singular memoir was neither poet nor philosopher, owes nothing either to popularity or success in his undertakings; but his character is one which cannot be regarded without the highest admiration, or those feelings of respect awakened by the picture of a man struggling with almost every adversity, and subdued by none.

The disposition and mental qualifications which excite the love of wandering, or render a man

eminent as a traveller, are almost as infinitely varied as the qualities which make one writer successful in one way, and another in another. The sojourner in the populous cities of modern Europe, is a wanderer from far different views and feelings to his whose tent is pitched among the ruins of Thebes or Babylon; and strangely opposite in disposition are the men who make their path through an Italian valley, or the untracked deserts of Africa. The one are the agreeable writers, the pleasant and easy gossipers from one nation to another, that amuse us with scandal or description; the others are great and venerable men, the priests of their order, led forth by a stern and mysterious impulse, and supported in their untrodden path by an inward consciousness of strength, by a deep and serious joy, that the perils of neither seas nor deserts can overcome.

Of this number was the unfortunate Ledyard, whose natural talents, constitutional vigour of character, and unflinching enthusiasm of heart, fitted him for the execution of the noblest enterprises. But his life was a continual struggle with disappointment and adversity, and we follow him through his short career with our admiration suspended between his ability and his fortitude.

This singular individual was born in the year 1751, at Groton, in Connecticut. Having lost his father while very young, he was successively consigned to the care of his grandfather and uncle, under the latter of whom he studied the law. Soon, however, disgusted with this pursuit, he was left, at the age of nineteen, without employment or profession. It was subsequently decided that he should enter the Missionary Institution of Doctor Wheelock, which that excellent man had recently formed at Hanover, on the banks of the Connecticut. He commenced his studies there accordingly, but it was not long before his adventurous spirit evinced itself in a variety of undertakings, and his determination was soon taken of abandoning the confinement of his College. As his departure from this place and previous adventures are described with no little felicity, and well delineate the character of Ledyard's mind, we shall extract the passage containing them:

'On the margin of the Connecticut river, which runs near the College, stood many majestic forest trees, nourished by a rich soil. One of these Ledyard contrived to cut down; he then set himself at work to fashion its trunk into a canoe, and in this labour he was assisted by some of his fellow-students. As this canoe was fifty feet long and three wide, and was to be dug out and constructed by these unskilful workmen, the task was not a trifling one, nor such as could be speedily executed. Operations were carried on with spirit, however, till Ledyard wounded himself with an axe, and was disabled for several days. When recovered, he applied himself anew to his work; the canoe was finished, launched into the stream, and, by the further aid of his companions, equipped and prepared for a voyage. His wishes were now at their consummation, and, bidding adieu to these haunts of the muses, where he had gained a dubious fame, he set off alone, with a light heart, to explore a river, with the navigation of which he had not the slightest acquaintance. The distance to Hartford was not less than one hundred and forty miles, much of the way was through a wilderness, and in several places there were dangerous falls and rapids.

'With a bear-skin for a covering, and his canoe well-stocked with provisions, he yielded himself to the current, and floated leisurely down the stream, seldom using his paddle, and stopping only in the night for sleep. He told Mr. Jefferson in Paris, fourteen years afterwards, that he took only two books with him, a Greek Testament and Ovid, one of which he was deeply engaged in reading when his canoe approached Bellow's Falls, where he was suddenly roused by the noise of the waters rushing among the rocks, through the narrow passage. The danger was imminent, as no boat could go down that Fall without being instantly dashed in pieces. With difficulty he gained the shore in time to escape such a catastrophe, and through the kind assistance of the people in the neighbourhood, who were astonished at the novelty of such a voyage down the Connecticut, his canoe was drawn by oxen around the Fall and committed again to the water below. From that time, till he arrived at his place of destination, we

hear of no accident, although he was carried through several dangerous passes in the river. On a bright spring morning, just as the sun was rising, some of Mr. Seymour's family were standing near his house on the high bank of the small river that runs through the city of Hartford, and emptied itself into the Connecticut river, when they espied at some distance an object of unusual appearance moving slowly up the stream. Others were attracted by the singularity of the sight, and all were conjecturing what it could be till its questionable shape assumed the true and obvious form of a canoe; but by what impulse it was moved forward, none could determine. Something was seen in the stern, but apparently without life or motion. At length the canoe touched the shore directly in front of the house; a person sprang from the stern to a rock in the edge of the water; threw off a bear-skin in which he had been enveloped; and behold John Ledyard in the presence of his uncle and connexions, who were filled with wonder at this sudden apparition, for they had received no intelligence of his intention to leave Dartmouth, but supposed him still there diligently pursuing his studies, and fitting himself to be a missionary among the Indians.

'However unimportant this whimsical adventure may have been in its results, or even its objects, it was one of no ordinary peril, and illustrated in a forcible manner the character of the navigator. The voyage was performed in the last part of April or first of May, and, of course, the river was raised by the recent melting of the snow upon the mountains. This circumstance probably rendered the rapids less dangerous; but it may be questioned, whether there are many persons at the present day who would willingly run the same hazard, even if guided by a pilot skilled in the navigation of the river.'—pp. 16-19.

Subsequently to this event, he made several ineffectual attempts at obtaining admittance into the ministry, which, after having occasioned nothing but disappointment, ended in his going as a common sailor on board a vessel bound for Gibraltar. After a year spent in this voyage, and having no prospect of employment, he determined on setting out in quest of some unknown relations in England, where he arrived, without money, or the chance of getting any, except by begging. He had the good fortune to discover his friends; but his idea of the respect due to him made him repulse every attempt on their part to do him good. His word had been doubted when he first made himself known, and it was enough for John Ledyard. It happened, however, that, while he was in London, Captain Cook was about to set sail on his last voyage. Our hero enlisted in the marines, made application in person to the great navigator, and was permitted to accompany him. The account given of the voyage forms an interesting part of the volume, as it contains several particulars not commonly known or mentioned in other publications; but for these we must refer our readers to the work itself.

Ledyard remained in the navy two years after his return from this voyage, and then returned to America. While at Hartford, the dwelling-place of his uncle, and where he continued four months, he wrote a *Journal of Cook's Voyage*, and formed some of those schemes, the execution of which so constantly occupied his mind. After his temporary rest, he proceeded first to New York, and next to Philadelphia, in search of some one who might be inclined to send him out on an experimental trading voyage to the north-west coast. First a Mr. Morris, then the merchants of New London, of L'Orient, and of Paris, and lastly the celebrated Paul Jones, held out promises of engaging in the scheme; but all, from some cause or other, was called off, and poor Ledyard was left in Paris without a hope or a louis. Not, however, to be deterred by disappointment, he again returned to England, where he was actually embarked on his desired expedition, when, according to his usual fortune, the vessel was prevented proceeding on her course. Still unsubdued, his next determination was, to make the tour of the globe from London, east, on foot! On this journey he set out, aided by a subscription commenced by Sir Joseph Banks, Dr. Hunter, &c.; and, after having proceeded through Sweden, Lapland, and

Finland, around the Gulf of Bothnia, into the Arctic Circle, on foot, arrived at Petersburg. From thence he set out for Siberia, in company with a Scotch physician, of the name of Brown, and after a journey of prodigious extent, arrived at Yakutsk.

After having proceeded thus far on his expedition, and having overcome difficulties which would have filled any other man with dismay, our traveller might well hope, that he should meet with no other opposition to his course, but that of the elements. This, however, it will be seen, was aided by another and more formidable power. It had been his intention to proceed immediately from Yakutsk to Okotsk, in order to pass over to the American continent at the earliest approach of the spring. But, to his consternation, he was informed that it was impossible for him to pass the roads at that season, and he was compelled, however unwillingly, to determine on remaining at the former place till May. From this resolution he found some opportunity of deriving a little, and he returned with Captain Billing, up the Lena to Irkutsk. But what will be the surprise of the reader, when we inform him, that, while at this place, an order came from the Empress to arrest Ledyard, and send him to the private inquisition at Moscow? Yet, such in truth was the case; and well might the free American, while he was whirled over the frozen and almost interminable wilds of Catherine's dominions, exclaim, 'It would be excellently qualifying, if every man who is called to preside over the liberties of a people, should once—it would be enough—actually be deprived of his liberty unjustly.' After having been carried before the tribunal at Moscow, where it does not appear that any accusation was preferred against him, he was sent to the frontiers of Poland, where he was set at liberty, and left to make his way in the best manner he could to England. He arrived in London in May, and, as if something should always occur to keep hope alive, however often overcome, Sir Joseph Banks introduced him to the African Association, as a person in every way calculated for prosecuting the discoveries they desired to make in Central Africa. Ledyard's services were accepted; he was fitted out for his departure, and with more of confidence than he had ever yet been able to indulge in, he set sail for Egypt. He arrived at Cairo on the 19th of August, 1788, and there, while hope was at its height, all the enthusiasm of his mind in action, and his foot upon the desert, his career ended in death.

Poor Ledyard! the annals of unfortunate genius have not another more adventurous or more distressing tale.

SCINA'S LITERARY HISTORY OF SICILY.

Prospetto della Storia Letteraria de Sicilia, nel secolo decimottavo; dell' ABBATE DOMENICO SCINA, Regio Istoriografo. Palermo, 3 vols. 8vo. London. R. Landl. 1828.

THE history of Italian literature is very little known in Europe, with the exception of that which relates to the two celebrated epochs in which Dante and Petrarch, Tasso, and Ariosto flourished. The progress of knowledge, in the eighteenth century, still remains buried in obscurity, especially those branches, less attractive, but more solid, which relate to useful sciences, and more immediately influence the prosperity of nations. It is not difficult to discover the cause of this state of oblivion, which has misled so many illustrious writers, and suggested reasons directly contrary to the testimony of facts. Italy, divided into provinces, each perfectly independent of the other, without any common centre for correspondence, without any uniform laws, to ensure to authors the proprietorship of their works, without that intellectual liberty which encourages the growth of great ideas, does not offer, like other countries, encouragement to the publi-

city of literary productions. There, knowledge receives its sole support from the passionate love of study; the love of fame even, that noble, innocent, and seductive passion of the human heart, is not always a certain spur to knowledge—because, there the possession of talents most frequently excites the suspicion of those in power, and fame often becomes to those who possess it, synonymous with crime.

Thus it happens that profound meditations on mankind, the universe, on physical or moral nature, are either privately announced under some disguise, are confined to a select number of faithful friends, or preserved in sheets, which remain inedited, either from a want of means, or from the political dangers which would attend their publication. Thus the history of an epoch scarcely past, is left in complete darkness, because the data most essential to link together the different parts in succession, are lost, and it becomes rather a history of the life and writings of a few literary men, than of the progress of literature itself.

It would be a splendid and most useful undertaking if the critics of Italy would compile an accurate history, each one of the particular province he inhabits, in which it would be easy for him to collect scarce notices, literary traditions, unpublished manuscripts, and the unknown works of all those who are there distinguished for their literary labours, and thus tracing and developing, in their different departments, the origin and gradual progress of sciences and letters, in all their separate branches, furnish sufficient materials from which to form a general history of the advancement of Italian literature during the 18th century. What hidden treasures would not, by this means, be discovered in the most remote corners of the kingdom! What information might not be drawn from that which now remains forgotten and unknown, more particularly in Lombardy and the kingdom of Naples! Of this species of particular investigation, a striking example has just been given by the Abbé Scinà, which justifies the idea before expressed. This meritorious citizen, already well known in Italy as a profound philosopher and learned naturalist, has published a general view of the history of Sicilian literature in the 18th century, which gives unequivocal evidence of the great progress which the inhabitants of that island have made in the cultivation of every branch of human knowledge; facts which, for the want of sufficient records, no other writer has before revealed, but which do not the less form a part of that vast mass of knowledge and discoveries with which Europe was at that time so fruitful, and from which the most remote posterity will derive gratification and delight.

The state of Sicily, at the commencement of that century, was deplorable; governed as a colony, by the delegates of princes far removed, whose only care was to preserve the conquest they had made, the people were deprived of every kind of public establishment for encouraging and facilitating the study of literature in general. Sciences, philosophy, and morals, only taught by exclusive right by the Jesuits, were buried in the darkness of pedantry, so well calculated to occupy the mind in verbal frivolities, and to keep the attention distracted from the arts, and from the knowledge of things in general. The ecclesiastical doctrines, under the same government, had no other end than to agitate the most frivolous questions, and to sustain false and empty conclusions, which, to use the language of Bacon, were neither instructive nor beneficial to mankind. Physical and natural history remained in absolute silence and oblivion, so that it was difficult to imagine that that island could ever have been the country of Empedocles and Archimedes. The sublime science of mathematics was there unknown to every one, as there did not exist any motives sufficiently powerful to induce application to its study. The elements of geometry were

scarcely even learnt by architects, and was considered a perfectly useless study for the rest of the nation. That land which had excited in the Greeks such brilliant recollections of glory and of prosperity, was almost ignorant of its former grandeur; and its beautiful language, corrupted and spoilt by the false school of Marino, only appeared to please by amassing metaphors and conceit, so as to prevent every possibility of having either good poetical or oratorical productions in the language.

In this miserable condition, however, there still remains a treasure, with which nature, not man, has largely endowed the inhabitants of that region; which is, a genius essentially lively, active, and brilliant, eager in the pursuit of knowledge, and impatient at remaining in obscurity and oblivion. Individuals of birth and fortune may dare to raise their voices, and, by their example, to save their country from an ignominious lethargy. By their private authority academies were instituted, libraries opened, museums founded, public schools restored, and learning again recalled to its ancient splendour. The results of this impulse were at first slow, but they were certain; and when, in the latter part of the century, the Government wisely concurred in sanctioning these powerful efforts, they became prodigious. The study of national memorials and antiquities, which was generally encouraged, produced an abundant number of writers on the origin and changes of the most celebrated cities of Sicily, and on the dominion which the Byzantines, the Arabs, the Romans, and the Swiss, had successively held in them. The excavations undertaken by rich individuals, lent their assistance in illustrating the history of the times by precious relics, drawn from the bowels of the earth, in medals, statues, instruments, vases, tombs, and monuments of every description. The learned languages, with which antiquaries found it necessary to make themselves acquainted, drew the attention of the public to the most valuable works of Greek and Latin antiquity, and thus rendering popular the best models of oratory and of poetry, purified the taste for literature, which, from that time, flourished with the greatest success. Ecclesiastical discipline, guided by bishops, celebrated for their learning as well as piety, was again restored to its original purity. Philosophy, throwing off the yoke of pedantry, vacillated for a long time between the systems of Leibnitz and Descartes, which, from the first, was useful, from giving an impulse to learning, and at length gave way to the doctrines of Locke and Condillac, the only men who have substituted facts for words, and realities for abstractions. Moral and political sciences arose, as it were, out of nothing, and excited, to so great a degree, the research after truth, that the people dared to make the Government sensible, that a legislative reform, in harmony with the new ideas that had arisen, was now become quite indispensable. Physics and natural history, in all their various branches, united with the mathematics, which are inseparable from them, were enriched by valuable investigations, happy discoveries, and clever analyses, which, above all, embellished alternately the departments of mineralogy, botany, and chemistry. And, lastly, the light which was thrown by the immortal Piazzi on astronomy, with the new enumeration of the fixed stars, and with the brilliant discovery of the planet Ceres, shows, to the glory of the Sicilians, that this impetus of the mind, without any foreign aid, was most powerful and effective and, like the voice of the Omnipotent, commands the light to shine, and it did shine.

Great and laborious must have been the searches which this work has occasioned its author: but so much greater will be the honour and fame which will redound to his name.

Endowed with an excellent judgment, and with a degree of erudition by no means common, he treads this vast field of facts with admirable success, carefully pointing out the names of the lit-

serati, the intrinsic merit of their various productions; the advancement of knowledge; the scope of opinions, the progress of useful truths; and never dissimulating the errors into which some of them have fallen from too much precipitation; the opposition which others excited, either from vanity or from ambition; and the solicitude of a whole people, in the most trifling circumstances, to merit an honourable post amongst cultivated and refined nations. In pronouncing his own opinion on the character of a scientific theory, or of a work of imagination, he always exhibits great sincerity, a correct judgment, a refined taste, and a perfect impartiality. The following judgment, which he gives on the incomparable poetry of the Abbé Meli, written in the Sicilian dialect, will serve as an example of the elegance of his criticism, and the extent of his knowledge:

'Giovanni Meli claims a place in the highest rank of poets; he happily possesses a mind adorned with the rarest qualities. Nature is often liberal in bestowing a greater or less degree of energy, nobleness, and vivacity of imagination; but she rarely accords the faculty of *feeling strongly* those things which are touching, simple, and elegant, and, at the same time, of depicting them in an ingenious and graceful manner. In the possession of this inestimable gift, Anacreon was unequalled among the Greeks, and Catullus among the Romans; and by the possession of this valuable talent, Meli has become the honour of Sicily and of our age. He has, indeed, written a great deal of poetry, and always with considerable success; but all his poetry does not possess an equal degree of merit. In some of his compositions he has not attained the summit of excellence; he has at least many competitors; and in the dithyrambic style he sometimes excels, but frequently falls short of other Sicilian writers, and is always far from attaining the beauty of Redi. But in the delicacy of his anacreontics he surpasses every other writer; he rises, alone, above all; and this beautiful poet, this new Anacreon, receives the admiration of every one.

'Nevertheless, there is, if I am not mistaken, a total difference in the two poets: Meli does not suddenly and boldly enter upon his subject, but gradually and gently leads to it, with the assistance of some graceful ideas. He breaks the bow of Cupid to praise an eyebrow; he throws the little loves into rebellion, to enchain them with golden ringlets; and always invents and calls to his assistance the most delicate and graceful conceptions. Not so the Greek poet. He is less imaginative, and is generally touched by the most trifling and delicate things, which he expresses with simplicity and grace. Thus it happens, that Anacreon, not making use of the beauties of imagination, abounds with delicacies of expression, whilst Meli, on the contrary, regarding chiefly the beauty of his thoughts, is sometimes careless of the elegance of his phrases. The latter, therefore, more easily than the former, may paint falsely, since Meli is the most imaginative; and every one knows, that the more the human mind gives itself up to the indulgence of imagination, the more likely it is to be deluded. Anacreon, in fact, is always true to nature; whilst Meli, although generally most happy, is yet sometimes in error. Anacreon, in short, is more simple than the Sicilian poet; but the ornamental and elegant ideas of Meli are more delightful and captivating. It is certain, that from the fruitfulness and natural character of the ideas with which Meli adorns his poetry, they appear to great advantage, not only in anacreontics, but in idylls, in eclogues, and in every species of pastoral poetry, a kind of writing which derives its principle charm from imagination. Even the most sublime and philosophical ideas receive in his mind a new form, and become simple, clear, and elegant, and still every one is struck and allured by them. This is instantly discernible in the 'Polemone,' which is alone sufficient to immortalize the name of Meli: it is a miracle of philosophy, of intense feeling, and of beauty. But without seeking any longer to describe the elegance and beauty of the verses of Meli, it is enough to say, that all Europe seeks them, translates them, and derives pleasure from them. It would, undoubtedly, be impossible to touch the hearts of people of different characters, different languages, and different customs, if, to beauty of style, were not added truth and nature, which every one can feel, and every one appreciate. The estimation in which Meli is held, is a proof that all the nations of Europe possess one general sense of the beautiful, for all Europe acknowledges him to be the poet of nature.'

BARTON'S POEMS.

A Widow's Tale, and other Poems. By BERNARD BARTON. Holdsworth. London, 1827. 12mo. price 5s. 6d. pp. 155.

A quick perception of moral truth, united to great tenderness of feeling, form the ground work of Bernard Barton's poetical character. In the possession of these qualities of mind, he is equal with writers of much superior genius; but he is destitute of that power of combining intense passion with beauty of sentiment, which shines so conspicuously in the minor poems of some of our popular authors. His productions, from the first to the last, evince a calm elevation of spirit, an equability of gentle feeling, and a delight in every thing pure and beneficial to mankind; but this is not all that is requisite, even in poetry written with a directly moral view; we want the energy and appealing voice of passion, even in the addresses that would calm us; we require the eloquence of thought, even in the soothing ballad; and no poetry, of whatever class it may be, will produce its proper and legitimate gratification without these qualities. Bernard Barton, however, is not deficient in the genial glow of heart which fits him for a pleasing and tender writer; and the features of his poetry are those most likely to recommend it to the class of readers to whom it seems more particularly addressed. It is sometimes founded on peculiar principles of feeling, which it is necessary for the reader himself to have deeply seated in his own heart, before he can enjoy it; and at others, it appeals to the mind with a nakedness of morality, which the simple-hearted members of his own sect alone can relish as poetry. Notwithstanding all this, however, he enjoys a degree of fame much greater than several more presuming writers, and we should not be surprised if his little pinnace steal with more certainty into the port of immortality than many swifter sailing barks.

Though he can hardly be called an imitator of Montgomery, yet he may be strictly said to resemble that poet in the moral and serious tone of his writings, and in the one great object which they have constantly in view—the illustrating of their opinions by the experiences of life. The latter, indeed, as a poet, is more independent of mere moral feelings, more imaginative in his constitution, and a greater master in all the splendid mysteries of his art; but a very great proportion of the readers of each admire them for the properties common to both.

It is a singular circumstance, that they are the only two authors of religious poetry that possess any degree of popularity in England, or whose names are heard beyond their respective sects; and it is a still more curious circumstance, that of these writers who alone have succeeded in this hitherto unpopular branch of literature, the one is a Moravian and the other a Quaker, members of sects, to which, of all others, we should have last turned our expectation for writers of such successful exertion.

Bernard Barton, there is little doubt, owed a considerable share of his original notoriety to the circumstance of his being the first openly recognized Quaker poet; and had he possessed much less talent than he does, this circumstance would have been sufficient to give him a very advantageous starting point; but he is now fairly before the public. His repeated appearances have made us forget his garb, and we are inclined to think his style is every year becoming more ambitious and ornamented. The principal poem in the volume under notice, and several of the minor pieces, are certainly of a generally higher tone, and more imaginative character, than any of our author's former productions; and whether his genius have acquired new vigour by exercise, or is less timid in the fashion of her attire, her present efforts have certainly more of the usual colouring of poetical language than any of her earlier ones.

'The Widow's Tale,' which is the principal

piece in the collection, is founded on an interesting and affecting account of the loss of several Wesleyan missionaries, who perished, with several other persons, in the *Maria* mail-boat, off the island of Antigua. The narrative was written by a Mrs. Jones, the only person saved; and it is from the materials furnished by this lady, that our author has gathered the subject of his poem. It consists of but forty-six stanzas, and it is only in its concluding verses that it appears to possess any peculiar merit. We have had so many descriptions of storm and shipwreck, of the heart-sickening despair and lingering hope of the sufferers, that it would require another poem of Byron to make us feel, as we should feel, on such a subject. The only peculiar feature of this part of 'The Widow's Tale,' is the calm expression of resignation displayed in the conduct of the characters introduced; if we except some occasional traits of deep feeling, and a passage which relates the catastrophe of this little story, in which the deep but subdued agony of a wife watching her dying husband, helpless and alone, is very touchingly described.

The extract we have selected as a specimen of the smaller pieces, is, we think, of considerable merit; but of this the reader will judge for himself:

THE DEAD.

Number the grains of sand on spread
Wherever Ocean's billows flow;
Or count the bright stars over-head,
As these in their proud courses glow;
Count all the tribes on earth that creep,
Or that expand the wing in air;
Number the hosts that in the deep
Existence, and its pleasures share;
Count the green leaves that in the breath
Of Spring's blithe gale are dancing fast;
Or those, all faded, sere in death,
Which flit before the wintry blast;
Aye! number these, and myriads more,
All countless as they seem to be;
There still remains an ampler store
Untold by, and unknown of Thee.
Ask thou—"Who, or what be they?"
Oh! think upon thy mortal doom;
And with anointed eye survey
The silent empire of the tomb!
Think of all those who erst have been
Living as thou art—even now;
Looking upon life's busy scene
With glance as careless, light, as thou.
All these, like thee, have lived and moved,
Have seen—what now thou look'st upon;
Have fear'd, hoped, hated, mourn'd, or loved,
And now from mortal sight are gone.
Yet, though unseen of human eye
Their reliques slumber in the earth,
The boon of immortality
To them was given with vital birth.
They were; and, having been, they are:
Earth but contains their mould'ring dust;
Their deathless spirits, near or far,
With thine must rise to meet the just.
Thou know'st not but they hover near,
Witness of every secret deed,
Which, shunning human eye or ear,
The spirits of the dead may heed.
An awful thought it is to think
The viewless dead out-number all
Who, bound by life's connecting link,
Now share with us this earthly ball.
It is a thought as dread and high,
And one to wake a fearful thrill,
To think, while all who live, must die,
THE DEAD! THE DEAD are living still.
We have no doubt that this little volume will add to the reputation of its author as a poet; there are occasionally some cold concepts and sprinklings of imagery, which might well have been spared; but while it possesses all the moral excellence, the quiet spirit and tender feeling of his former works, it exhibits much more genuine poetical spirit, and consequently, more power of raising general interest.

HISTORY OF THE TURKS.

History of the Ottoman Empire, chiefly prepared from hitherto unexamined Manuscripts and Archives, Vol. I. From the Foundation of the Ottoman Empire, until the taking of Constantinople. By the Baron Von Hammer. Published by C. A. Hartleben, Pest, and printed at Vienna, 1827. (Second Notice.)

Our preceding analysis of this very able and comprehensive work, closed with the reign of Murad, surnamed the Lord and Conqueror, one of the most fortunate Sultans who ever wielded the sceptre of the Ottomans. His name holds a more conspicuous place in Turkish history from the splendour of his victories presenting to the eyes of the Musulmans so striking a contrast with the misfortunes and captivity of his successor, whose genius was eclipsed by that of the great Tamerlane. The reign of Bajezid commenced rather inauspiciously for the fate of the future relatives of the royal blood, with the execution of his own brother, an example unfortunately adopted as a legitimate privilege by succeeding Sultans. At the outset, his warlike expeditions were extremely successful, and he was the first who ventured to undertake the siege of Constantinople. But the brilliancy of his exploits was obscured by the dark ferocity of his character. He is stated to have put to death 10,000 Christian prisoners, and to have first laid waste Athens, and other cities of Greece. On approaching, however, the city of Constantinople for the second time, his victorious career was checked by crossing the path of his still more formidable rival, who, after having acquired glory in his Persian, Indian, and Syrian campaigns, directed his power against that of Bajezid. The struggle of these two great commanders for disputed sovereignty, and the generosity of the conqueror,—who, so far from enclosing his prisoner in an iron cage, left him in comparative freedom,—are well detailed; offering an historical picture, highly interesting, and very opposite to that which we have hitherto been accustomed to contemplate. After the conquest of Bagdad, the territories of Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, Georgia, and Armenia, speedily fell before the arms of Tamerlane, who continued his victorious career until he approached the city of Angora, where the Sultan Bajezid, at the head of an immense army, prepared to receive him. The description of the battle, in which tributary princes and various nations, on both sides, bore a part, rendering it one of the most imposing and formidable struggles for empire upon record,—strike us as being the most spirited and interesting in the whole work.

We shall, therefore, present our readers with an extract of some portion of the details relating to the eventful day, which ended in the captivity of Bajezid, and left Tamerlane undisputed master of the empires of the East. It was fought on the 29th of July, 1402, (804 of the Hejira,) and commenced at the break of day: "About the hour of six the battle was announced by the shrill sound of the Tartars' trumpets, followed by the onsets of Sürin! and answered by the clash of the Turkish timbrels, and the shout of *Allah! Allah!* which rent the air. Timur then, by the advice of a Dervish, alighted from his charger to offer up a prayer; and next gave instant command for attack. *Mirza Abubekr*, at the head of the vanguard of the right wing under his father, *Mirra-shah*, attacked the rear of the Ottomans, where the Servians allies, fighting like lions, checked the fury of his onset; seeing this, *Mirza Mohammed Sultan*, who commanded the centre, threw himself at the feet of Timur, entreating permission to hasten to the assistance of the left wing, for the European troops of the Ottoman fought with the most invincible bravery and resolution. Whilst the Servians upon the left performed these prodigies of valour, the troops of *Aidin*, who beheld their former princes in the enemy's ranks, went over to them from the right wing, and were followed by those of *Sasuracan*, *Mentesche*, *Ker-*

mian, and the Tartars, who by Timur's secret negotiations had been induced to desert. Already were the Servians of Bajezid upon the point of being cut to pieces, when their heroic leader, *Stephan*, at the head of his remaining horsemen, dashed through the opposing squadrons of the enemy sword in hand, carrying tidings to the Sultan, his father-in-law, of the desertion and flight. Timur witnessing this act of heroism on the part of the Servians, exclaimed aloud, "The Dervishes (i. e. the poor) truly have permitted themselves to wait for nothing." Bajezid persevering in his usual obstinacy, maintained his position upon a height of which he was in possession, surrounded by ten thousand janissaries, without striking a blow. But Stephan finding the battle lost, and the impossibility of saving the Sultan, covered the retreat of his eldest son *Suleiman*, who had been rescued by the Grand Vizier *Ali Pasha*, by *Aga Hassan* the janissary, and the *Subsachi Aurebeg*, and proceeded with him in the direction of the sea. The Emir *Amasia*, likewise placing Prince Mohammed in the centre, made a rapid retreat towards the East, into the mountains.

The Sultan Bajezid, thus left with his bodyguards and allies, and surrounded by his Viziers and Emirs, his Pashas and his sons, continued to occupy the height with his janissaries, fainting with intense heat and thirst, during the whole day. The excessive heat resembled that of the day at *Houain*, when the great Prophet so steadfastly maintained his ground against the overwhelming numbers of unbelievers; and like that upon the plain of *Kerbela*, where Hussein and his faithful, borne down by privations and thirst, fell into the hands of the enemy. Bajezid likewise thus persevered in imitation of the Prophet and his uncle Hussein. His ten thousand faithful janissaries, weakened by thirst, dropped one by one, or fell an easy prey to the sword of the Tartars: it was only when night came on, that Bajezid, urged by Minnetbeg's entreaties, consented to fly; but his horse fell with him, and he was taken prisoner by *Mahmudchan*, the descendant of *Dschengischian*, (*Jengiz Khan*) the titular Khan of *Dschagatai*.

Along with Bajezid, all the chief princes and officers of his court fell into the hands of Timur. Prince *Mustapha* was slain in the battle; and, according to the Byzantine historian, *Ducas*, when his father, Bajezid, was brought prisoner into his conqueror's tent, he found him engaged playing chess with his son *Schahroch*. At the moment his great captive appeared on the threshold, he was exchanging places, says the historian, with his king and his tower, just as the King of the Ottomans had exchanged his throne for the tower of captivity. All the Persian, Turkish, and Greek historians, however, agree, that Timur's first reception of the fallen Sultan was magnanimous and noble. When he beheld his prisoner exhausted by thirst, and heat, and the toil of battle, covered with dust, in his presence, he rose, and addressing him in kind words, seated him at his side; he then pointed out to him three stately tents, declaring they were his, at the same time, swearing by the most sacred oaths that his life was in no way endangered. At the entreaty of Bajezid, that his lost son might be sought for, and permitted to console him with his society, Timur appointed people for the search. They only discovered Prince *Mirza*, and brought him in his costly attire into Timur's presence. One of the chief Emirs, and a relative of Timur himself, was appointed to the care of Bajezid, along with *Tschempai*, formerly sent to his court in the character of an ambassador; which subsequently gave rise to harsher treatment, and to the idle report of the iron-cage,—subjects that are treated of at length in the following chapter. The present closes with some considerations upon the important consequences of the battle of Angora, which we must now pass over, for the purpose of dwelling upon other remarkable epochs in the Ottoman annals.

Early in the 15th century (about 813 of the Hejira) there flourished at the Court of Sultan *Suleiman*, a number of distinguished poets and learned men, who carried the Turkish literature and language to the highest degree of refinement. The works of the poet *Ahmed* are highly extolled, no less than his witty and satirical replies, in some court dialogues with the personages of his times. The reign of *Mirza* was equally celebrated for the cultivation of poetry and polite letters, inasmuch that this period may be considered as one that reflects most credit upon the intellectual character and productions of the Turks. An interval of peace, likewise, under *Mahomet I.*, was favourable to the promotion of science and literature, as well as to the consolidation and internal regulations of the Ottoman Empire. *Mohammed* founded a number of new institutions, both political and literary; and many celebrated viziers, physicians, civilians, sheiks, and poets, arose in succession, and kept pace with the spirit and progress of their age. Their genius and writings are treated of in the ninth chapter, which presents also some curious details relating to those fanatical tumults resulting from opposite religious orders, analogous, perhaps, to schisms in the holy Church, and still more peculiar to the warm and enervating climate of the East.

To *Mahomet I.* succeeded *Murad II.*, who possessed himself of the entire power in opposition to the claims of *Mustapha*. He undertook the fourth unsuccessful siege against Constantinople, and compassed, by treachery, the entire destruction of the Turcomans. In the twenty-third year of his reign, he voluntarily vacated the throne in favour of his son, *Mohammed*, and subsequently twice resumed it under great political emergencies, and again resigned his power; offering one striking contrast, at least, to the established form and spirit of the Ottoman polity. His political and military genius carried terror into the countries which he invaded; and the emperors of the East, not excepting *Constantine*, were eager to court and preserve pacific relations, in order to delay the evil day that threatened to overwhelm them.

The same chapter contains an account of the exploits of the famous *Scanderbeg*, the scourge alike of the Ottoman and of the Christian states. As these, however, and other minor details belonging to the 15th century, are comparatively well known to us in works of modern history, we shall hasten at once to the important era of the accession of *Mohammed II.* to the throne, and the celebrated siege and capture of Constantinople. After a very long interval of peace with the Christian princes, preparations were made for the last Byzantine war, which involved the fate of the Greek empire in the East. It was commenced on the 14th of June 1452, and occupied nearly the interval of one year between the first operations and the final storming of the city of the Emperors. This took place on the 20th May 1453; and is described in the following terms, presenting a picture at once vivid, energetic, and appalling. We have only to regret that we cannot exhibit it entire:

"The battle began about the dawn of day,* on the 22d of May, the festival of *St. Theodosia*, and this time without the signal usually given with the great cannon. In order to weary out the Greeks, *Mahomet* had sent, at break of day, only the recruits and invalids of his army to the assault, reserving his choicest troops to a later hour in the morning. The first encounter was fiercely contested on both sides, but with most loss upon that of the Turks. As day advanced, the whole city appeared to view, surrounded in a cordon by the hostile hosts, that seemed to threaten to smother it in its ruins. The terrific din of horns, trumpets, and kettle drums, mingled with battle cries, resounded on all sides. All the batteries of the besiegers opened upon the city, and then followed the general assault, both by water and by land. During two hours it raged without intermission, and without the enemy gaining a

* "Mich dem zweyten Hahnenuß";—With the second cock-crow.

single foot. The Sultan himself, wielding his iron club, was seen now encouraging and now threatening his troops. Immense stones, hurled from the towers, crushed the assailants as they advanced; Greek fire-bombs streamed from the bulwarks of the fort into the sea; and ladders were shattered as they were raised; balls flew upon balls; while a black cloud of dust enveloped at once the city and the sun. Theophilus Paleologus and Demetrius of Cantacuzel drove the besiegers back; the Emperor sat on his horse, seen everywhere encouraging his soldiers by word and by deed. At this time, Guisteniani was wounded in the arm or the thigh, or both; he entreated the Emperor to wait his arrival, while he went on board ship to have his wound dressed. But the Emperor encouraged him to remain, as the wound seemed only slight; Guisteniani, however, could not be prevailed on to keep his post. "Where," cried the Emperor, "Where hasten you?" "Thither," replied Guisteniani, "whence God himself opens a path for the Muslim; and he made his escape to Galata, equally unmindful of his past renown, and of his future infamy. His retreat had the effect of disheartening the troops; and Saganos Pasha, becoming aware of the confusion in their ranks, now excited his janissaries to renewed efforts. One of these, a man of gigantic frame, named Hassan, from Ulabad, stretching his shield over him with his left hand, with his scimitar in his right, ascends the walls, followed by thirty others. The besieged, with arrows and stones, defend themselves manfully; eighteen of the janissaries are laid prostrate, and others, encouraged by Hassan's example, share the same fate. Struck by a stone, he, too, falls; yet he is seen to rise again, and, as he kneels, extends his shield once more towards the walls, until it becomes buried along with him under a shower of stones. Whilst the gate of the Holy Romanos, against which the chief attack was directed, was thus nobly defended, the Turks had already the city at another point. The besieged suddenly found themselves attacked in the rear by about fifty Turks. It was now that the report of the city being taken, was every where spread abroad, until it reached the gate of the Holy Romanos, and soon spread new dismay into the confused ranks of the Emperor. Yet heroic feats were still performed by Theophilus Paleologus, by the Spaniard Don Francisco Toledo, and Johannes the Dalmatian; though the Emperor saw that all opposition was become vain against the overpowering torrent of the enemy. 'For me,' he cried, 'I prefer to die rather than to live, at the same time dashing among the besiegers; and beholding himself deserted by all his followers, he uttered the memorable complaint: 'What! is there no Christian left to take my head?' which he had no sooner spoken before he fell under the swords of two Turks; one of whom attacked him in front, the other from behind. Thus perished Constantine Dragofer, the seventh of the Paleologi, and last of the Greek emperors, in defence of those city walls erected by the first Constantine—the foundations of the capital of the Byzantine empire, which had endured a thousand years. The Turks now rushed in by the land side, as well as by the harbour, through the gate called Caligaria, over heaps of the slain, which filled up the trenches and the breaches in the walls. They put to the sword all the soldiers whom they met flying from the walls, in the belief that the garrison consisted of at least fifty thousand men. Two thousand thus perished, until the real weakness of the Greeks being discovered, a stop was put to the slaughter! This would not have happened had the Turks believed that the garrison did not exceed seven or eight thousand strong; such was their desire to obtain male and female slaves, to gratify either their avarice or their lust. The inhabitants, meanwhile, had flown to the port, not yet in the hands of the enemy; for about fifteen Turks who had sought to enter through the subterranean passage of the Reifthor, had been driven back; and most part of the fugitives succeeded in gaining the open gate of the port, and embarking in Greek or Genoese vessels. But when the gate-watch observed the throng of the fugitives, he closed the doors, and threw the keys over the walls, in the superstitious belief, that, according to an old prophecy, the Turks would penetrate as far as the middle of the city, to the Forum Tauri (now Taubafari,) and that from thence they would be repulsed and driven out by the inhabitants.'—Vol. I. pp. 546—549.

With the fall of Constantinople, the historian brings this volume, embracing above a century and a half, in twelve chapters, to a close. Besides the map and plate, it comprehends a mass of preliminary and other materials in form of illus-

trations and notes, both throughout and at the end of the work. There is also a valuable catalogue raisonné of all the Eastern books and MSS. referring to the history and literature of the Ottomans.

THE SPANISH AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

History of the Revolution of the Republic of Colombia, by JOSE MANUEL KESTREPO, Secretary for the Interior, to the Executive Power of the Republic. 1 vol. 12mo., with an Atlas of 12 Maps. Paris. 1827.

We perfectly agree with Senor Kestrepo in the importance of this history, not only to the South Americans, but also to all those who, from the various motives of utility or curiosity, are desirous of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the means which the new Spanish American States have adopted for the establishment of their independence.

This important consideration acquires still greater force, on seeing that an illustrious Minister, on whose talents and judgment depends, in so great a degree, the fate of the Government to which he belongs, has become the historian of what has passed under his view, and the narrator of that which has been effected principally by himself. It is also true, as the same author observes, that it requires the pen of a Tacitus to write the history of the New American States; but the great merit of Tacitus chiefly depends on his having depicted things by which his mind was strongly moved; and in the virtue of impartiality, which is the characteristic of his labours, Senor Kestrepo is by no means inferior to his model; although it must frequently have been much more difficult for him strictly to observe this, on account of the great personal interest he must have had in all that he narrates and describes. Senor Kestrepo, compelled by the nature of the successes which he relates, to dip his pen in tears and blood, pays a bitter tribute to the truth of history; but, in support of his pledge to be strictly impartial, he generously delights in profiting, by every occasion which presents itself, to eulogize the conduct of the enemies of his country, when their actions appear worthy of being signalized. This impartiality is even still more apparent in the sacrifice which he evidently makes of his own particular powers of display as a florid writer, and one capable of embellishing his work with the beauties of patriotic enthusiasm, to the cool reasoning style of a rigid historian. He has, indeed, frequently condemned the credulity and blind passions of the people, when too much exercised in favour of the defenders or martyrs of liberty; and if, on this account, Senor Kestrepo's History may at first have fewer admirers among those who are of his political party, it will, for the same reason, obtain a higher rank in the estimation of unprejudiced readers, and, above all, in that of posterity.

The book is divided into three parts, naturally suggested by the events which occurred, 1st, in New Granada; 2dly, those which happened in Venezuela before these were united to form the Colombian territory; and, 3dly, those which were common to both these ancient states from the time of their being joined under the dominion and government of one republic, under the name of Colombia. But in order to present a complete picture, in which are not only delineated the number and character of the events, but also their intimate connection with those which preceded them, and their results, which is the true basis of the philosophy of history, Senor Kestrepo prefaces his facts with an introduction explanatory of the physical, moral, and political state of each of the provinces, which now form the state of Colombia, at the period of the war for independence, comparing their state then, while under subjection, with that which they now present, as free and independent. This part of the work is, in our opinion, by far the most important; not only as enabling its readers to form an accurate

judgment of historical results; but also, especially considering the ungrateful task of narrating a long series of bloody scenes, characterized by all the dreadful symptoms of domestic hatred as well as external war. In order to give to this important portion of the work all the weight of authenticity, it is concluded with a collection of extremely curious statistical documents, the most complete and exact, that, up to this time, have ever been given on the actual state of Colombia, either as a Spanish colony, or as an independent republic.

This introduction is written with the conciseness, perspicuity, and judgment, of one perfectly in possession of the subject to which he has devoted his attention, and accustomed to view things in their connection with one another, and with reference to the general interest.

If we followed the bent of our inclination, we should be disposed to accompany the author through all the curious and interesting particulars with which, without wasting a single page, he explains this valuable commentary of his history; but we must content ourselves with recommending its careful perusal to such of our readers as feel a deep interest in the subject, and presenting to the rest a brief analysis, interspersed with a few short extracts from the work itself.

After noticing the limits and extent of Colombia with the exactitude of a practiced geographer, and after giving a description of its physical state in every branch which can interest either the merchant, the navigator, the naturalist, or the soldier, he describes the nature of the civil, ecclesiastical, and military institutions, which existed in New Granada and Venezuela at the time of the Spanish dominion, explaining their defects, especially those of the judicial departments; showing, at the same time, the important fact, that this very system of government is the same as that which prevailed in all the other states of Spanish America which have now become republics. This fact alone should strongly recommend this part of the introduction to the attention of all those who are desirous of knowing what America was, when under the administration of Spain. He then goes on to give an idea of the state of manners, customs, the religion, education, and character of the inhabitants at that epoch; and to describe, on the one hand, the causes which led to their declaration of independence, and, on the other, those which retarded, and rendered its accomplishment so difficult and so costly. He reckons among the first, the exclusion of the native Americans by the landowners; the pride and haughtiness of the Spaniards resident in the country; the tyrannical prohibitions and persecutions of the Inquisition; their prohibiting the Creoles from dedicating themselves to the cultivation of useful sciences and arts; the system of colonial commerce, exclusively in favour of the mother country; and lastly, the example of liberty, which was presented by North America to the enlightened classes of the adjoining continent. Reflecting on the power of these causes, and estimating their influence, it is easy to ascertain the habits which they would necessarily create in a docile and ignorant people subjected to them for upwards of three centuries; and the obstinate resistance which these same habits would oppose to every sort of innovation, although reforms generally were even desired by the mass of the people. Nevertheless, the manner in which Senor Kestrepo has explained these consequences, is most luminous and satisfactory; and this part of his introduction is, perhaps, the most useful in showing the nature of the facts subsequently detailed in the body of the work.

Our author, in entering on that part of his history which relates to the present state of Colombia, observes, that when the liberator, Bolivar, gave this name to the republic, in honour of the immortal discoverer of America, he performed an act of justice which has been denied to him by his contemporaries. We must observe, that, from the

time in which Americus Vesputius first sought to usurp the glory of giving his name to the new world, there were numerous Spaniards who opposed what they considered so great an injustice; some desiring that it should be called 'The West Indies,' others 'Fernandus,' others again, 'Isabella,' and others, and not the least powerful, 'Columbiana,' in honour of the illustrious navigator.

But we must conclude our rapid analysis; and, without stopping to describe the actual state of the republic, as regards its political organization, pass on to give some extracts from this interesting portion of Senor Kestrepo's work. The first is the picture which he draws of the defects of the judicial administration still observed in Colombia. After thus showing the great advantages obtained by the abolition of the inquisitorial proceedings, he says:

'In the other branches of judicial power, Colombia is far from having secured the same advantages which her people derived from having extinguished the odious tribunal of the Inquisition, and established their admirable political institutions. The tribunals, both civil and criminal, proceed in the same manner as in the time of the viceroys, and according to the same Spanish codes. Hence it is, that, generally speaking, the administration of justice in Colombia is in a lamentable state. Jury-trial is applied only to the abuses of the press, and latterly, a slight imitation of it has been introduced into commercial tribunals of the first resort. Our judicature, therefore, retains the same defects which we have elsewhere attributed to that of Spain, when these countries were colonies; with the further disadvantage of the collision which our judges encounter between the ancient monarchical laws, and the new liberal institutions of Colombia. By the latter, indeed, the former are superseded; but, in many cases, it is very difficult to discern whether an ancient law be or be not repealed, and justice between party and party depends on the opinion of the judges: the evil must be destroyed to the very root by the formation of civil, criminal, periodical, commercial, and military codes—but the work is difficult; it requires time for its accomplishment, and for the institution of certain indispensable preliminaries. On the other hand, our legislature must regulate the more urgent branches of administration before it can apply itself to the formation of codes. Meanwhile, those lights will be diffused which the government is endeavouring by all the means in its power to promote; and it may be possible to establish trial by jury, that best support of liberty, which could not, however, be realised without serious inconveniences in an ignorant community, educated by the colonial system, and among whom it would, in many places, be impossible to find a sufficient number of jurors endowed with the necessary qualifications.'

In this last point, relative to trial by jury, we must say, that Senor Kestrepo appears to us too timidly to follow the opinion, until now generally entertained, that, for the establishment of this mode of trial, it is indispensable that the people should have attained a certain stage in civilization and moral habits; but, avoiding a minute exposition of the reasons which induce us to think differently, we will content ourselves with recording the example of Ceylon, where the trial by jury has been introduced by Sir Alexander Johnston with the greatest possible success, to the more perfect administration of justice, to the reform of manners, and the progress of civilization, notwithstanding the great difference of castes, the ignorance of the people, and the powerful influence of a superstitious religion. We consider the trial by jury one of the most efficacious instruments for the improvement of society. But both in this, and the liberty of the press, it is folly to talk of preparing people for these institutions; it is by these institutions they are to be prepared for every other species of improvement. Let us, therefore, avail ourselves not only of the means employed by the most civilized people, but also of those which are most conformable to justice, and which reason and good sense make acceptable even to the most unenlightened people. We shall thus soon succeed in establishing the freedom of the press, and trial by jury, as plants indigenous to all latitudes and all climates. But to return to our extracts:

'Usages and Manners of the Colombians.

'The usages of the Colombians differ but little from those of the Venezuelans and Granadinas anterior to the revolution. As their chief intercourse, during that revolution, has been with the English, they have acquired some of the customs of their new friends, and are gradually changing their former habits. Improvements are taking place in domestic economy, and in the general dress of the people, which exhibit greater taste and elegance. Their progress, however, is necessarily slow, for in all nations the mass of the people are strongly attached to the habits and usages of their forefathers.

'The same remarks may apply to the general manners of the Colombian nation: it is composed of the Venezuelans and Granadinas, and consequently retains the manners common to both those nations before the revolution. It may be generally asserted that, in the present day, we Colombians are neither better nor worse than we were when the war of independence broke out; with the exception of some districts of the Cordilleras, and a part of the Eastern Plains, where the war has been carried on by the respective partisans of the king and of the republic; and where acts of plunder and violence have most frequently occurred, the people continue in subjection to the law, and are returning to their domestic occupations.'

'State of Knowledge.

'We cannot reasonably expect a great mass of information to exist among men who have so lately been colonists of Spain, and who have for the last fourteen years been principally occupied in war, for the purpose of shaking off the grievous yoke of the mother country. It is also to be observed, that the dagger of their proud oppressors has cut off many valuable lives, in order to extinguish that intellectual light which is one of the most powerful antidotes to despotism. Morillo, in particular, adopted and avowed the principle, 'that in America there should exist only farmers, artisans, and miners; that by this regulation, and by drawing from Spain the agents of government, the advocates, judges, and a great many missionaries, pursuing the same policy which the Spaniards had observed at the time of the conquest, the colonies might still be preserved. Yet it cannot be asserted generally, that the knowledge is at present inferior to that which the Colombians possessed at the commencement of their political regeneration. We have, indeed, fewer advocates, civilians, men of letters, naturalists, and mathematicians; for, during the revolution, young men have not had sufficient leisure to become versed in those branches of science and art; but to make amends, the principles of public law, of political economy, and of legislation, are pretty generally studied; and these sciences, so essential to the welfare of nations, were formerly quite unknown amongst us. The same remark applies to the art of war. While we were colonists we were quite unacquainted with it, and we have now excellent generals, who have successfully studied its principles, and have frequently triumphed, in battle, over troops and generals of Europe. Besides, the shackles having been broken which the Inquisition imposed on public instruction, by their odious prohibitions, books now circulate freely, and the people being thus furnished with the means of acquiring information, the clouds of ignorance are everywhere disappearing. With a free press, the public journals contribute to the same end, these circulate weekly in every quarter; and while under the colonial system, three scarcely appeared at intervals of three or even six months, a few copies of the Madrid Gazette, in the hands of three or four individuals of some of the principal cities of Venezuela and New Granada, the periodical papers are now read by a great proportion of the people, who discuss their contents, interest themselves in political affairs, and are experiencing a complete revolution in their mode of thinking. That great engine of intelligence, a free press, will undoubtedly, in a few years, convert into a new people the former colonists of Spain!'

Tales of the Moors, or Rainy Days in Ross-shire.

Blackwood. 1828.

OUR limits will not, this week, allow us to give a detailed notice of this very delightful volume. Mr. Blackwood's discrimination has enabled him to publish several works of fiction, of standard and permanent value;—and though the volume before us may not have the exquisite tenderness of 'The Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life,' nor the powerful humour and perfect truth of 'The Annals of the Parish,' it is distinguished for its quiet elegance, its gentle pathos, and its rare purity of style and incident. The tales are four, of which we shall next week give an analysis.

MESSRS. HORACE AND JAS. SMITH, AUTHORS OF THE REJECTED ADDRESSES.

THE publication of Mr. Leigh Hunt's Work on 'Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries,' being delayed for a day or two, we still defer our review; and, in the mean time, confine ourselves to extract. Perhaps we cannot gratify our readers more than by quoting some of the pages that refer to Messrs. Horace and James Smith, the witty and well known authors of the 'Rejected Addresses.'

'Of James Smith, a fair, stout, fresh-coloured man, with round features, I recollect little, except that he used to read to us trim verses. The best of his verses are in the Rejected Addresses; and they are excellent. Isaac Hawkins Browne with his Pipe of Tobacco, and all the rhyming *jeux-d'esprit* in all the tracts, are extinguished in the comparison; not excepting the Probationary Odes. Mr. Fitzgerald finds himself bankrupt in *non sequiturs*; Crabbe knoweth not which is which, himself or his parodist; and Lord Byron confessed to me, that the summing up his philosophy, to wit, that

"Nought is every thing, and every thing is nought,"

was very posing. Mr. Smith would sometimes repeat after dinner, with his brother Horace, an imaginary dialogue, stuffed full of incongruities, that made us roll with laughter. His ordinary verse and prose are too full of the ridicule of city pretensions. To be superior to any thing, it should not always be running in one's head.

'His brother Horace was delicious. Lord Byron used to say, that this epithet should be applied only to eatables; and that he wondered a friend of his, who was critical in matters of eating, should use it in any other sense. I know not what the present usage may be in the circles, but classical authority is against his Lordship, from Cicero downwards; and I am content with the modern warrant of another noble wit, the famous Lord Peterborough, who in his fine, open way, said of Fenelon, that he was such a "delicious creature," he was forced to get away from him, "else he would have made him pious"! I grant there is something in the word delicious, which may be said to comprise a reference to every species of pleasant taste. It is at once a quintessence and a miscellany; and a friend, to deserve the epithet, ought to be capable of delighting us as much over our wine and fruit, as on graver occasions. Fenelon himself could do this, with all his piety; or rather he could do it because his piety was of the true sort, and relished of every thing that was sweet and affectionate. The modesty of my friend Horace Smith (which is a manly one, and has no hectic pretensions to what it deprecates) will pardon me this reference to a greater name. He must allow me to add, at some hazard of disturbing him, that a finer nature, except in one instance, I never was acquainted with in man; nor even in that instance, all circumstances considered, have I a right to say that those who knew him as intimately as I did the other person, would not have had the same reasons to love him. The friend I speak of had a very high regard for Mr. Horace Smith, as may be seen by the following verses, the initials in which the reader has now the pleasure of filling up:

"Wit and sense,
Virtue and human knowledge, all that might
Make this dull world a business of delight,
Are all combined in H. S."

'Mr. Horace Smith differed with Mr. Shelley on some points; but on others, which all the world agree to praise highly and to practice very little, he agreed so entirely, and showed so unequivocally that he did agree, that (with the exception of one person (V.N.) too diffident to gain such an honour from his friends) they were the only two men I ever knew, from whom I could receive advice or remonstrance with perfect comfort, because I could be sure of the unmixed motives and entire absence of self-reflection, with which it would come from them.* Mr. Shelley said to me once, "I know not what Horace Smith must take me for sometimes: I am afraid he must think me a strange fellow; but is it not odd, that the only truly generous person I ever knew, who had money to be generous with, should be a stockbroker! And he writes poetry too," continued Mr. Shelley, his voice rising in a fervour of astonishment; "he writes poetry and pastoral dramas, and yet knows how to make money, and does make it, and

* With all his vagaries, I must add Mr. Hazlitt, who is quite capable, when he chooses, of giving genuine advice, and making you sensible of his disinterestedness. Mr. Lamb could do it too; but for interference of any sort he has an abhorrence.

generous!" Mr. Shelley had reason to like him. Horace Smith was one of the few men, who, through a cloud of detraction, and through all that difference of conduct from the rest of the world, which naturally excites obloquy, discerned the greatness of my friend's character. Indeed, he became a witness to the very unequivocal proof of it, which I mentioned elsewhere. The mutual esteem was accordingly very great, and arose from circumstances most honourable to both parties. "I believe," said Mr. Shelley on another occasion, "that I have only to say to Horace Smith that I want a hundred pounds or two, and he would send it me without any eye to its being returned; such faith has he that I have something within me beyond what the world supposes, and that I could only ask this money for a good purpose." And he would have sent for it accordingly, if the person for whom it was intended had not said nay. I will now mention the circumstance which first gave my friend a regard for Mr. Smith. It concerns the person just mentioned, who is a man of letters. It came to Mr. Smith's knowledge, some years ago, that this person was suffering bitterly under a pecuniary trouble. He knew little of him at the time, but had met him occasionally; and he availed himself of this circumstance to write him a letter, as full of delicacy and cordiality as it could hold, making it a matter of grace to accept a bank-note of 100*l.*, which he enclosed. I speak on the best authority, that of the obliged person himself; who adds, that he not only did accept the money, but felt as light and happy under the obligation, as he has felt miserable under the very report of being obliged to some; and he says, that nothing could induce him to withhold his name, but a reason which the generous would excuse. "From his friends, in private, he has no reason to conceal it, and he does not, as I can testify; and there is one thing more which he says he will conceal from nobody; which is, that subsequently to that obligation, he incurred others from the friend in question, which not only taxed his friend's kindness, but his patience; and that, notwithstanding these trials, the other was still so generous to discern in him what was well-intentioned from what was badly managed, and has retained to this hour so kind an opinion of him, that he never makes a step in better management (for his slow progress in which he has had more excuses than most people, in sickness, temperament, and a total want of education for it,) but he is accompanied, and assisted, with the hope of pleasing him, before long, with the sight of the fruits of it. Such friends, and such only, (including those whose wish to act like them is as unequivocal as their inability,) are the friends that do a man all the good that can be done him, because they are not only generous to his virtues, but as humane to his faults as other people are to their own. For my part, I scarcely ever write a page which the public thinks worth reading, and which they like because it serves to keep them in heart with nature and mankind, but Horace Smith is one of those friends whom I fancy myself talking with, and whom I wish to gratify. It is such as he that a humanist would have the world become, and that furnish a proof that the wish is not founded in impossibility. Swift said, that if the world contained a dozen Arbuthnots, he would burn his books. I am convinced that the world contains hundreds of Arbuthnots; if education would but do their natures justice. Give me the education of a community, in which mutual help instead of selfish rivalry was the principle inculcated, and riches regarded not as the end, but the means; and I would undertake, not upon the strength of my own ability, but on the sole ground of the absence of what is at present taught us, to fill the place full of Arbuthnots and Horace Smiths; not, indeed, as to wit and talent, but with all their geniality, and sense, and open-heartedness; with the same reasonableness of gain, and readiness of enjoyment.

When Mr. Horace Smith sees this account of himself, he will think that too much has been said of his generosity; and he would be right, if society were constituted otherwise than it is. Actions of this kind are not so common in trading communities as in others, because people learn to taste the value of every sixpence that passes through their hands. And for the same reason they are more extravagantly admired, sometimes with a fatuity of astonishment, sometimes with an envy that seeks relief in sarcasm. All these excesses of homage are painful to a man who would fain have every body as natural and generous as himself; but the just tribute must not be withheld on that account, otherwise there would be still fewer counteractions to the selfishness so abundantly taught us. At the period in question, I have said that Mr. Smith was a stockbroker. He left business with a fortune, and went to live in France, where, if he did not increase, he did not se-

riously diminish it; and France added to the pleasant stock of his knowledge.

On returning to England, he set about exerting himself in a manner equally creditable to his talents and interesting to the public: I will not insult either the modesty or the understanding of Mr. Horace Smith, by comparing him with the author of "Old Mortality" and "Guy Ranning;" but I will venture to say, that the earliest of his novels, "Brambletye House," ran a hard race with the novel of "Woodstock," and that it contained more than one character not unworthy of the best volumes of Sir Walter. I allude to the ghastly troubles of the Regicide in his lone house; the outward phlegm, and merry inward malice, of Winky Boss, (a happy name,) who gravely smoked a pipe with his mouth, and laughed with his eyes; and, above all, to the character of the princely Dutch merchant, who would cry out that he should be ruined, at seeing a few mamegs dropped from a bag, and would then go and give a thousand ducats for an antique. This is hitting the high mercantile character to a nicety,—minute and careful in its means, princely in its ends. If the ultimate effect of commerce (*permulti transibunt, &c.*) were not something very different from what its pursuers imagine, the character would be a dangerous one to society at large, because it throws a gloss over the spirit of money-getting, which, in a thousand instances to one, is a debasing spirit; but, meanwhile, nobody could paint it better, or has a right to recommend it more, than he who has been the first to make it a handsome portrait.

The personal appearance of Mr. Horace Smith, like that of all the individuals I ever met with, is highly indicative of his character. His figure is good and manly, inclining to the robust; and his countenance extremely frank and cordial, sweet without weakness. I have been told he is irascible; if so, his city training is in fault, not he. He has not a jot of it in his appearance.

THE TRAVELLER IN EXILE.

(ROME.)

HE walk'd amid the ruinous wrecks of Time,
The soul of ages in those ashes slept—
And where, alone, the thoughtful wanderer wept,
An empire's form once raised its front sublime.
Its vast tomb now bare record of its crime,
That once its parent earth in blood had steeped—
Ambitions of the world it had not kept,
For Luxury had fed upon its prime.

Thy fortune was but like the specious rose
Upon the virgin's cheek, inviting death,
That brightest glows as fleets the vital breath;
So thou didst fall into thy long repose:
Remembering her he loved, as thus he said,
Again the wanderer wept, and bow'd his head.

SONNET TO A LADY.

I SAW thee in thy lost heart's hopelessness—
The ruby lip, clear brow, and laughing eyes,
Had left thee then—the eloquence of sighs
And tears was thine, that language of distress
The world had taught thee in its bitterness;
And thou wert as a stricken deer that flies
Wounded to covert;—untold agonies
Wrung thy pure spirit;—yet didst thou meekly bless
The hand that poured the vial on thy head,
That should have shielded thee from every wrong.
He won thy heart, and brake it; but not long
The spoiler of thy peace may boast the deed,
And go unpunished: those sad sighs and tears
That speak to Heaven, shall shake his soul with fears.

HISTORICAL QUESTIONS.

What turn would the course of events have taken, had the Emperor Charles V., in conformity with Alba's advice, re-established the Imperial residence in Rome?

Might not the age of Charles IX. have been restored in France in the nineteenth century, had Napoleon turned Protestant, and converted his subjects, which it was in his power to do, and which he seemed for a moment to meditate?

Had Frederick II., of Prussia, accepted the crown of Corsica, which was offered to him, what changes would that event have produced on the history of France, and the commencement of the nineteenth century?

If, after the battle of Cannæ, Hannibal had marched to Rome, which lay open before him, and thereby rendered Carthage mistress of the world, what influence would that event have produced on the destinies of the world?

NEW MUSIC.

Reminiscences of Fairy Land; a Divertimento for the Piano-forte, on three favourite melodies. Composed and dedicated to Miss Wetherall. By J. L. P. Esq., Clementi and Co., 3s.

This is a very pleasing production, arranged in good taste, not difficult, yet not puerile. The following quotation, engraved on the title, from the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel,' may explain the composer's intentions better than any remarks of our own:

'Merry elves their morrice paces
To gaily minstrelsy;
Emerald rings on brown heath trailing
Trip it deft and merrily.
Up, and mark their nimble feet!
Up, and list their music sweet!
Sir Walter Scott.'

Under the feeling excited by these animating tones, the writer has, after a showy introduction on a single page, adapted the following admired and appropriate melodies, viz.: 1st, 'From Oberon in Fairy Land;' (in which is introduced an episodic minuet); 2d, 'The old glee of 'Lightly Tread;' and last, though not least in estimation, Arne's beautiful melody, 'Where the Bee sucks.' These form, we repeat, a pleasing sonata; and although it may be considered a little antiquated in style, according to the present florid character of performance and writing, yet its very sobriety may to many become its recommendation. On the 6th page we perceive a palpable imitation of Rossini's universal passage which he introduces in overtures, songs, duets, &c., (whether serious or gay, sacred or profane;) viz.: in common time, one bar, a minim between two crotchets, (hence a syncope), followed by a bar of triplets. Our well-informed musical readers will instantly perceive to what we allude. In the 9th bar of 'Where the Bee sucks,' a sharp is wanting to the note D; but, upon the whole, the 'Reminiscences' are well arranged, well engraved, and well worthy the success we wish them.

'The Fall of Paris,' with Variations, composed and arranged as a *Duet* for the Piano-forte. By F. HUNTER. Balls, 3s. 6d.

We suspect this duet is written for 'two performers' upon a Piano-forte, but as it is evidently of German origin and composition, we must excuse the peculiarity of Mr. Hunter's title. The piece reminds one so constantly of Moschelles' delightful variations upon the same air, that if it were for that reason alone, we could recommend it; independently of which, it is certainly a very clever production, and may be compassed by performers of mediocrity. This, the continental 'Fall of Paris,' is somewhat a different melody from the English piece of that title, and is the better of two. Mr. Hunter (of whom we never before heard, but of whom we hope to hear again) has written four showy variations, each occupying a brief page, and all in a lively good style. He follows them by an appropriate military allegro, as a finale of two pages, and thus concludes a very varied and agreeable duet.

'The Mountain Maid Quadrilles,' contain 'I'll never do so any more' 'Love among the Roses,' 'Woodland Mary,' 'When the yellow Moon beams,' and 'The Mountain Maid,' arranged for the Piano-forte, with their proper figures, and dedicated to Madame Vestris. By JAMES PAINE, original Leader and Director of the Orchestra at Almack's. Dale, 3s.

As we can have very little more to say of these Quadrilles, after giving their title, we have done so at length, diffuse as it is. They are, as usual, dedicated to the Terpsichore of the present day; and, although that lady may never have seen them, still they form an offering upon her altar.

The airs are all pleasing, and well adapted as Quadrilles; they are grammatically and correctly arranged, and not difficult to be performed.—Paine deserves these commendations at least.

MONUMENTS IN THE ISOLA DI FARNESSE.

The Isola di Farnese, which was added to the Papal dominions in 1824, is ascertained to be the site of the ancient city of Veii, the rival of Rome. This fact is proved beyond all doubt by the monuments of antiquity lately discovered at the Isola di Farnese. Among them are numerous Latin inscriptions, in which some of the magistrates of Veii are mentioned. One of these is as follows: 'III. Viris Vicentium. Municipis Mumie. I. Augusti Vicentis Intramurani Patrono.'

LETTERS OF CRITO.—No. I.

CRITICAL QUALIFICATIONS OF MR. LOCKHART, AS
EDITOR OF THE QUARTERLY REVIEW.

To the Editor of the Athenæum.

SIR,—Agreeing with the rest of the world, in their opinion of your capacity manifested in former publications, which are sure evidences of a well-stored mind, I cannot but hail your new undertaking with pleasure. The ability of the two first numbers of 'THE ATHENÆUM,' in the opinion of a numerous class of readers, is the certain index of a great and permanent addition to our literary stores; and the fearless impartiality with which it sets out, will render it invaluable. But in nothing am I struck with it more than the bold, yet honourable spirit, with which it sets itself forward to combat, in fair fight, those little but overbearing tyrants, among the Reviewers of the day, who convert their offices into an engine of detraction, as envy, prejudice, or other personal motives prompt them. Like every petting petty officer, they 'use their heaven for thunder,—nothing but thunder.' It is certain that, most ignorant of what they are most assured, they play their fantastic tricks with an arrogance as unworthy as it is insolent; yet all this, as you, Sir, have well observed, is merely because they know themselves to be accusers, witnesses, and judges, at the same time; and, what is still better, that, whether from indolence, indifference, or cowardice, they have always been left without reply. Now, I, as well, seemingly as yourself, have a little in me of the honest tar, who, being asked why he did not go to Church, replied, 'that he did not like to hear a man talk big for an hour, when there was no one to contradict him.' This, however, has hitherto been the favoured fortune of many of our Reviewers, and dearly have they abused it!

It is as startling, as unaccountable, to what a pitch of impolitic presumption well-educated men will allow themselves to be driven, from a consciousness of this impunity. The screen of the critical chair, which, from the very circumstance of its being a screen, ought, one would think, to operate upon a high-minded scholar to produce a greater scrupulousness as to action, seems to extinguish all gallantry of spirit, as well as all justice of proceeding; and men in the shape of critics, without names, do not hesitate to blurt out upon their rivals, or the objects of their hostility, the epithets of 'slaver,' 'madman,' 'dolt,' and even 'liar,' who yet, when in society, and with names, would pass, if they could, for very accomplished gentlemen. It is a known fact, that in the establishments of some great Reviews, upon the coming out of any work, particularly if from a rival publisher, it is a mere business-question to ask, before it is read, whether it is to be abused or praised? We have heard of one critic, or at least of a Quarterly Reviewer, who made it his boast that, by the sharpness of his criticism, in other words, by his virulence, he had shortened the life of a literary veteran. Other instances are on record where a review has been made the vehicle of private feeling, and a previous personal quarrel has invariably jaundiced the judgments pronounced by the critic; with what credit to himself, or what advantage to letters, we leave the public to judge; that public, who, thus ill-used and insulted, are sufficiently resentful, but have hitherto had no means to express their opinion of such miserable dealings. To you, Sir, therefore, are we obliged for the much wanted, and most necessary facilities, which your paper, with praiseworthy firmness, has held out, by which this hateful and ungenerous spirit can alone be put down. To you belongs the glory of having, as you say, 'unfurled the standard of resistance to an unjust dominion,' yet so wretchedly administered, as well as unjust, that our only surprise is, how, with such important pretensions, the world have so long allowed it to exist. That the pretension,

in the instance, you have selected from the Quarterly Review, is, what I have called it, impotent, is proved by every line you have written upon the article analysed; and as you open the portals of 'THE ATHENÆUM' to all who deem it honourable to combat with you, you will perhaps forgive me if I offer myself as a zealous, though humble coadjutor.

It is, indeed, sometimes not easy to detect very high-sounding, though very silly fallacies; to expose oracular but very false judgments; and to strip mysticism and mystification of the tinsel which conceals their poverty. Yet, where there is real poverty, it cannot long wear the semblance of riches; and if it do not exceed your limits to admit a short series of letters, upon this subject, I propose, with your leave, to follow the plan you have so ably traced out, in your dissection of Mr. Lockhart's Review of 'De Vere,' and (though *hæc passiva equis*) to pursue 'THE QUARTERLY,' since that gentleman undertook its direction, through many other of its faulty criticisms,—so faulty, indeed, have they been, that we wanted no obituary to tell us the loss of its former conductor. We are in the situation of the famous Montecuculli, who, from the first movement of the Army opposed to him, after the death of Turenne, immediately perceived the loss it had sustained of that celebrated commander.

It is, however, in Mr. Lockhart's own works, (not of criticism, but of imagination,) that I propose, if only in fairness to him, to examine his real pretensions to judge of others. The scrutiny will be strict, but I trust not disrespectful. On this point I have little ambition to follow the example of many Reviewers themselves, who think that they are forcible when they are only offensive, who mistake insolence for wit, and violence for dignity. *Jura neget sibi nata* seems, indeed, the motto of a modern critic; of none more than the Critic of 'THE QUARTERLY' himself, who is generally—

'So over violent, or over civil,

That every one, with him, is god or devil.'

The reason for this is, what your sagacity has discovered:

'Nulle n'aura de l'esprit

Hors nous et nos amis.'

This is, in fact, the secret (nor do I think it dishonourable to his feelings, though little advantageous to his character as a judge) of all those violent ebullitions of praise, with which he overwhelms his relative, Sir Walter Scott; and those attempts, either by force or stratagem, to lower the reputation of all other writers in the same class. He can bear no brother near the throne; and hence, where he thinks he is able, endeavours to strangle what he deems interlopers, with open violence; or where he cannot do this, presents them with a cup sweet, indeed, but sweetened with poison. In his whole conduct, he reminds us forcibly of the lines:

'Some valuing those of their own side or mind,

Still make themselves the measure of mankind;

Fondly we think we honour merit then,

When we but praise ourselves in other men.

Thus wit, like faith, by each man is supplied,

To one small sect, and all are damned beside.'

How much more justly, as well as more amiably, is the character of real criticism appreciated by one, whom, if Mr. Lockhart would endeavour to imitate, the cause of letters, whatever his natural taste may lead him to think, might, perhaps, not suffer; 'Recte de autoribus et rebus judicare, solidæ et absolutæ eruditionis est, quo, in fallor, omnes aspiramus.' That this just account of true criticism has long been lost sight of by THE QUARTERLY, its changed and lowered character has sufficiently demonstrated. Those are gone who, from their rank, their opportunities, their genius, and reputation, as authors, gave it its first high flight, and preserved so long its elevated career; they have left it at least to mere barking and mysticism, and the admirable tact of converting its mechanism into an instrument of personal enmity. There is

indeed, among its contributors, one brilliant and amiable exception, and that is, the excellent Sir Walter himself. But we know not if even he can restore its sinking reputation.

It is time, however, to come more into details, and examine a little closer the causes of that decay which has struck the observation of every one. The first of these is, beyond all question, to be found in the personal partialities, and personal hostilities of its conductors. We do not seek to undervalue Mr. Lockhart. Spite of his three novels, we think him a man of abilities; spoiled, indeed, by an extremely bad taste, but still a man of abilities. We regret, therefore, that these abilities should be emasculated, as it were, by the mode in which his want of tact has impelled him to employ them.

His devotion to family feeling, we might indeed forgive, as a man; but as a critic, its bad taste must be obvious to every one; while the blindness and illiberality which it has generated towards the rest of the world, is not less hurtful to the cause of letters, because it may have sprung from personal motives. Our judges could not formerly try causes in counties wherein they themselves were connected. What should we say to that judge who tried the cause of his son? In fact, literary pretensions know no ties of blood. They cannot be measured; cannot be exalted by relationship; neither can the want of that relationship, or of good-will from personal causes, prejudice or destroy them. In all these respects, therefore, Mr. Lockhart is a jurymen whom we challenge for cause. He is so devoted to the great planet, which we all of us admire in common with himself, (though, probably, as we shall show, with somewhat more measure,) that he will allow no other planet to wander in the same heavens. No other style of writing is tolerated by the high priest of the Sun; or if any thing is attempted in the same style, it is *crimen læsæ magistratus*, and the culprit is instantly, I will not say tried, but condemned and executed, by a sort of military tribunal. Yet with all our admiration, all our affection for him, Sir Walter Scott is a determined mannerist, and so was he once deemed by THE QUARTERLY itself, in days when prejudice and self-interest had not sealed up its doors against all fair discussion.

We allude to the masterly review of Nigel, in those better times in which, with all allowances for that superlative beauty of description which is Sir Walter's characteristic, the sameness of his fables and his characters is plainly but not unfairly asserted. His finger is known like the finger of Sir Peter Lely, whose dazzling impression is always felt, though always under the same colouring, and attitudes, outline and drapery. He has 'three characters,' says THE QUARTERLY,* when free from son-in-law prejudices, which meet us at every turn: 'a virtuous passive hero, who is to marry the heroine; a fierce active hero, who is to die a violent death; and a fool or bore, whose duty it is to drain to the uttermost dregs, one solitary fund of humour.' To this might be added, with no sort of injustice, that his heroines are, almost always, either an unfeminine virago, or a mawkish girl. With all sincerity, ranking among the warmest of Sir Walter's admirers, we do not hesitate to say, that this opinion of THE QUARTERLY was the general opinion of the world. We shall presently see how instantly, as well as how impolitically, it was changed, at the moment the son-in-law critic became the arbiter of the judgments pronounced upon the father-in-law author.

But before we proceed to the discussion of the most hyperbolic panegyric that ever offended taste in the shape of criticism, we must add, that mere favouritism, or contracted notions, or even the notorious bad taste of indulging personal feelings while delivering a judgment, are not the only bane of Mr. Lockhart's literary reputation. There

* See Quarterly Review for October 1822. p. 339.

is an absolute deficiency in that *logical mind*, which, we humbly conceive, is as necessary a part of the qualifications of a great critic as those other attributes of sensibility, imagination, candour, and the power of polite discussion. In all these we are bold to say, because the proofs are at hand, and will be presently given, that the present conductor of 'THE QUARTERLY REVIEW' is lamentably deficient. Of the first defect, the want of a logical mind, did we lack other proofs, you, Sir, have furnished them abundantly in that skilful examination, which we set out with noticing, of the review of 'De Vere.' But there are other criticisms in 'THE QUARTERLY REVIEW' which equally demonstrate a failure not only in this, but in many other respects. We shall see, in these, how mystified hyperbolics may be made to shock all common sense; how a wrong judgment may select, for proofs, examples that prove any thing but the thing sought for; while it passes by pages of the most shining brilliancy, and leaves volumes of fine passages and characters untouched, the least of which would create and preserve a splendid reputation.

Into all these we will advance, by dissecting the discriminating faculties of 'THE QUARTERLY,' in regard to works of imagination and belles lettres, since its present Editor assumed its superintendence. We confine it to these works, not only because you, Sir, have set the example in your able paper on the same subject, but also because, while the subjects themselves are lighter and more engaging, they are the only subjects to which Mr. Lockhart has addressed himself as an original author: I call upon all scholars, and particularly all men of taste, to attend to the inquiry on which I shall enter in my next. CRITO.

FIRE-SIDE SKETCHES.—No. I.

New Year's Eve.

THERE is a dreamy, melancholy mood of thought into which the mind sometimes steals without any perceptible reason for it; a sort of voluntary trance in which the spirit resigns its activity, but retains its consciousness, and floats passively up and down the stream of time and humanity. There is a luxury in this state of mind, of which every one has tasted more or less. To the busy and active it is the spirit's bed of down; to the lonely, deep-thinking and imaginative man, it is the passage to scenes of inconceivable loveliness; shadowy and indistinct and dim, but dropping with the rich dews of a most perfect harmony. But the awakening from this dream is painful in proportion to the intensity of its impressions. We feel the walls of mortality closing round us with a sensation of suffering; the realities and circumstances of life arrange themselves as barriers to our enchanted palace; the past, with its mellowed sacred beauty, is lost under the glare of day; and we hear a thousand voices telling us, that, while our hearts seemed to see their holiest remembrances become instinct with life and form, they were but in a vain and unprofitable dream.

The last night of the old year found me in the mood I have been describing, but there was pain and regret mixed up with the sensations it produced; visions floated around me that had but just escaped from my grasp, and the unreal had been too lately a part of the present and the palpable to let me enjoy it in reverie. We can look steadily and calmly back on the far off waves of life; but we shrink from watching them, when they are still bearing the wrecks of our lives and enjoyments. I felt that it would be wiser to escape from my lonely thoughts; and, seeing the clear bright moonlight glittering through my window, I buttoned myself up, and sallied out for a ramble. I had not, however, gone far, when a dense fog arose, my path became hardly discernible, and the thick heavy dew dripped off my hat as in a steady shower of rain. There was no alternative, but either to stay out and get unimaginably wet,

or return back to my solitary study, to neither of which I could reconcile myself: the one threatening me, in plain sober language, with a most unsophisticated cough all the winter, and the other with something worse. I remembered, however, that there was more than one fire-side at which I should be a welcome guest, and I accordingly determined on paying a short visit to some of my most domesticated acquaintances.

The house I first made for was that of an excellent man, who had formerly been in business; but, having had a property left him by a relative, had for some time been living in the enjoyment of independence. He had been twice married, and by his former wife had three daughters, who were grown up and still living with him. His present wife, to whom he had been married little more than a twelvemonth, was only a year or two older than his eldest daughter, and had been introduced to the father as her particular friend. I soon found myself at the house of my old acquaintance, and in the warm comfortable drawing-room, where I had often spent the winter evening before his present marriage. Since this event, I had seldom made so unceremonious a visit, and every little alteration, therefore, in the arrangements of the family party became at once visible. When I formerly spent my evenings there, the place itself seemed fitted to fill every one who entered it with all comfortable feelings. There was that warmth and quietness which make an essential part in the idea of a happy home. There was no sound that could disturb the soft repose of the spirit as it retired into its sanctuary, and no object that could recal any thing but images of peace and contentment. My friend used to be seated in his arm-chair, undisturbedly reading the paper, or attending to one of his daughters, who would sometimes persuade him into hearing a novel read, while those who were unemployed thus would be busied in performing some little task which their filial affection had set them. There was now a considerable alteration in their fire-side arrangements. The two eldest daughters were seated at a work-table, drawn into one corner of the room, and by their close and half-whispered conversation, showed there was some little division of family confidence. The younger sat reading to herself by the fire, and my friend, half bending out of his arm-chair, with his placid features considerably excited by anxiety, was watching the feeding of a baby, who shrieked, to the utmost capacity of its lungs, every time the nurse took the spoon from its mouth. Opposite to him sat his wife, lolling easily in her chair, and evincing infinitely less perturbation, but every now and then casting a look at her husband, which seemed to me to express anything rather than reverence for his fatherly looks. Truly did my words stick in my throat as I wished the party a happy new year; but, fortunately for me, my friend having entered into an edifying discussion with his wife on teething and sore mouths, ended by determining instantly to go out and purchase the last new work on the diseases of children, and advice to new married people.

Out, accordingly, we went. We had before rambled together in the evening, and long and pleasantly amused ourselves with its mixture of merriment and repose, or ruminated, in the philanthropy of our hearts, on the misery behind its curtain; but, alas! my companion was no longer the same man. Instead of the firm and somewhat strutting step with which he formerly walked, he hastened on with a quick shuffling pace and stooping gait, that bespoke the confirmed old man. Heaven keep me, thought I, as I parted with him, from pouring the dregs of my wine-cup into another's full and sparkling bowl!

I next bethought me of an acquaintance whom I cordially esteemed, but whose habits of close retirement, and peculiar turn of mind, deprived him of those companionable qualities which I then felt most in need of. I was sure, however, of finding his fire-side the same as it was when I

last visited it, and this was enough to determine my course. The house I was now approaching was a small, two-storied tenement, situated at the corner of an obscure street, and only different from the rest in the neighbourhood by having a rapper on the door, and an appearance of superior cleanliness. I found my friend at home, as I never remember not doing, and seated with his wife before a fire, which, though occupying scarcely half the depth of the stove, shone bright and cheerfully over the clean swept hearth. This solitary couple, though still in their youth, had been married some years, and had already enough of trial and affliction to separate them from the world, and drive them like frightened birds to the shelter of their nest. They had married from a romantic and almost self-abandoning attachment, for they neither of them possessed the means of increasing the pittance which my friend inherited from his father, but their love was all sufficient for their happiness. It had defied the worldliness of every other passion, and in their quiet little home they had learnt a philosophy of the heart, which, after all, is stronger in its meek yielding tenderness than the purest stoicism that ever existed. I felt my spirits grow sober as I drew my chair nearer to the fire, and as I listened to their conversation, as cheerful as their solitude and subdued hopes could let it be.

The next friend I visited was one of long, long standing, the friend of my boyish days, of the years whose history is written on the holiest page of memory; she was the dearest one I had, for she had been the companion of my far absent mother, the long constant companion of her whose name always brings back to my ear all the sweet music I have ever heard. She was a widow, and her fire-side had the deep quietness, the peaceful, but too solitary air of one that had lost its accustomed circle of happy faces. The old lady was closely engaged in reading; a large favorite cat sat at her feet; and the whole apartment was full of winter comfort. But she was alone, and she felt her loneliness, for with the vain effort of a hurt mind to amuse itself with shadows, I saw she had placed the chair, in which her husband used to sit, with scrupulous exactness in its accustomed position, a handkerchief was thrown over one of the arms, and a favourite volume lay open on the cushion. We began to talk, and soon were we far back in the vale of years. Time had read a moral to us both, but she only had learnt it. I sighed as I wished her good night. There is a loneliness in the house of a widow, and a melancholy in her resignation, which I have never witnessed without a feeling too deep to mix well with the lighter fancies of my mind. I tried, but I could not say 'a happy new year.'

It was now growing late; I had, however, but one more friend to visit, and his house was on my way home. I was soon there, and, as I entered, I was greeted with a dozen voices, all sweet and silver as the tones of a flute, and only breaking their bird-like harmony by the hearty unrestrained laugh that burst from their free bosoms. It was a happy scene; the large old-fashioned parlour, with a fire blazing away as if it knew it was a Christmas fire; the crowd of happy boys and girls making a festival by their very presence, and the delighted-looking parents, bearing in their countenances traces of care,—anxious, heart-heaving care, which seemed only to have forgotten itself for a season; all these together made up a scene full of gladness, yet with a sufficient shade of melancholy to prepare my heart well for its return to solitude.

Sombre, though not painful, were the sensations that passed through my breast; but they were not peculiar to myself. They are common to our race, and are the ground-colouring, more or less deep, of every heart. Time, if it have an audible voice at no other season, is heard all over the world, when he gathers another year into the mighty dormitory of eternity. No one heard the clock strike twelve last night without feeling as if he saw a

phantom. The very means which the vulgar make use of at this period to dissipate thought, are those which people employ to amuse themselves in a haunted house; and you may be in the most boisterous party without seeing one who does not make an involuntary pause when the closing minute arrives. There is at that instant a hesitating, stifling feeling within us, as if Time laid his fingers upon our heart, and held it in their grasp, till he let it free again to burn and palpitate with the hopes and agonies of a recommenced existence.

ALMANACS OF THE STATIONERS' COMPANY, AND 'THE BRITISH ALMANAC.'

We certainly were not prepared to expect the pleasure of perusing an official defence of their Almanacs, by the Company of Stationers. We had imagined, that, like most grave and dignified personages, they would have privately affected to despise the censures which they could not publicly repel. In this course, they would have shown something of that commercial prudence which is the instinct of those who do not over-abound in moral wisdom. We rejoice that they have thought fit to publish an Advertisement; signed, indeed, anonymously, but adopting a tone, and entering into details, which could only proceed from an accredited agent of the Company. We rejoice in this; because it has been to us a source of honest satisfaction, that we have been the first, effectually, to proclaim the gross ignorance and depravity of the most extensively circulated and influential of the Company's Almanacs; and this Advertisement enables us to complete the exposure. They have, up to this period, constituted a sort of literature which was held beneath the notice of periodical criticism. We have dragged them into the light. The astrological empirics shall, for the time to come, have an open stage, beneath the clear canopy of the heavens. We shall see if the noontide blaze have any influence on the future character of the commodity.

The author of the Advertisement of the Stationers' Company, which occupied two columns and a half of the 'Times', has been pleased to mix up his charges against the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, with his complaints of the Reviewers of the Almanacs in 'THE ATHENÆUM.' We are thus constrained to be, in some degree, the advocates of the Society, in maintaining our own original position; and though we do not shrink from this honourable duty, we beg, once for all, distinctly to state, that the article which has excited this mighty, though natural indignation, was written by a regular contributor to Mr. Buckingham's previous publication, 'THE SPYNNX'; and was so written, at the desire of Mr. Buckingham himself, after he was in possession of a copy of the British Almanac.*

We take the accusations of the Stationers' Company in the order in which they occur:

1st, They (the Society) have caused to be compiled, printed, and published, an Almanac, the British, in which their Editors have unfairly availed themselves of the computations, and other labours, of the Editors employed by the Stationers' Company in their Almanacs.

To establish this charge, the writer first asserts, that 'the preliminary notes, the holidays at public offices, the law terms and returns, the Oxford and Cambridge terms, and the transfer days, are to be found in nearly all the book Almanacs, and several of the sheet Almanacs, published by the Stationers' Company; and farther, that the miscellaneous register, in the British Almanac, comprising lists and tables connected with government, commerce, and education, contains matter, some of which may be seen in 'Goldsmith's little neat Almanac,' some in 'Gilbert's Clergyman's Almanac,' some in 'Moore Improved,' some in 'the Clerical,' and some in 'Rider's.' Well! Have the Stationers' Company a Monopoly of this information? The British Almanac, according to this account, gives in one book the information which is scattered through many of the Company's Almanacs. Is this a demerit? It certainly is not a disadvantage to the public, for they can thus purchase, in a little book, for 2s. 3d., what the Stationers sell, in a dozen books, at from 2s. 3d. to 5s. EACH; and they thus save their money, and a great deal of their time. But then the British Almanac gives the information in the same way;

that is, it prints the names of members of parliament, of bankers, of army agents, *alphabetically*; the only possible mode in which such names could be given for reference. We recollect an anecdote somewhat in point. Sir Evan Nepean, a good man of business, though not profoundly skilled in literary matters, was applied to for his sanction, as Governor of Bombay, for the publication of an English and Mahratta Dictionary. He referred the point to three learned gentlemen, who reported upon it as a useful and original undertaking. Sir Evan, with great naïveté, replied to them, that it might be highly useful, but that he utterly denied its originality, for there was not an English word in it that could not be found in Johnson's Dictionary, and that was not arranged precisely in the same manner as in that work!

The other charge against the Society is this: that they have copied, from the various Almanacs published by the Stationers' Company, the monthly column of sunrise and sun-set, the day's increase, the length of day, of day-break, of twilight, and of the tides; (we observe that they have also copied the days of the month, and the moon's age.) We know not whether the Society will deny or admit this, or whether they will trouble themselves about the matter; but this we know, that if they have borrowed these minor computations this year, they may have a very fair excuse to the public in the suddenness of their determination to publish an Almanac, which 'should disseminate all the information usually contained in an Almanac, and some matter of a more general nature, and of a higher value; and supply the place of the vain and hurtful, because misleading speculations, of the Almanacs most in demand, by pure and useful information.' It is quite clear that the Society must compute these small affairs for itself next year, if its Almanac is to be in the field at the same time with the Company's publications, as it is promised to be; and those who know any thing of the matter, are aware, that these computations are the simplest things possible, as the Advertisement acknowledges; and for the reward of one guinea, would be done with abundant correctness for popular purposes, by any mathematical usher in any writing-school of the kingdom.

But it may be as well to let in a little light upon the mode in which the greater part of the Company's Almanacs, and of all Almanacs, are constructed. They are taken from the Nautical Almanac, which is always published three years in advance, by order of the Commissioners of Longitude, at the expense of the public. It is from this source (and we do not complain of the borrowing) that the Stationers' Company take their calendar,* their moon's changes, their phenomena of the planets, their sun's right ascension and declination, their equation of time, and their lunar phenomena. It is in the 'Nautical Almanac' that they find, ready to their hands, all those matters which constitute the real value of their three scientific Almanacs; and of which they SCATTER some of the tables amongst their popular Almanacs, like grains of wheat in bushels of chaff. The Stationers' Company add to these valuable tables—astrological predictions of the fates of nations—predictions of the weather—doggerel verses—indecent and lying columns of the parts of the body, affected by the moon—obscenity—and there is another word we must subjoin to our previous accusations, and that word is—BLASPHEMY. It is this admixture of truth and falsehood, of useful information and pernicious trash, that renders them so dangerous. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge have added to the most popularly applicable of these calculations of the 'Nautical Almanac,' remarks for the conduct of life, and the regulation of the will and of the understanding,—anniversaries (not copied from the 'Gentleman's Diary,' for that has three in January, and the British thirty-two)—meteorological averages, distinguished for their clearness, their brevity, and their assemblage of interesting facts—astronomical notices, calculated to impress the mind with a pious awe of the greatness of the Creator. We need not say another word on this branch of the controversy. In whatever way the common Almanacs be produced, the Stationers ought to feel ashamed,

* The calendar, in the 'Nautical Almanac,' and in the Almanacs of the Stationers' Company, follows the wording of the calendar in the Book of Common Prayer. In the 'British Almanac,' all the words are literally copied, which describe the festivals of the church. It is in consequence of this, that the Advertisement of the Stationers' Company twits the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge with retaining the expression, 'K. Charles, Martyr;' but in that Almanac are, however, omitted, and we think properly, the names of saints that are not now recognized in the Protestant church, but which were originally left by the Reformers to meet the habits of the people. St. Vincent and St. Fabian, and many other saints retained in the common Almanacs, have no more to do with the England of the present day than St. Anthony of Padua.

that, having access to proper materials, they publish the meagre and disgusting affairs they call Almanacs. From whatever sources the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge have derived their Almanac, full, instructive, innoxious, and cheap as it is, they have the merit of having struck at the root of a pernicious monopoly, and of having given their purchasers an opportunity of redeeming the English character from the disgrace which the Stationers' Company charge upon the people,—that nonsense and profaneness are alone suited to their capacities.

The second complaint which is contained in the Advertisement, applies more peculiarly to ourselves. It is as follows:

'Why is it that your reviewer selects the names of several most respectable and honourable men, and holds them up to public contempt and derision? His own language will answer. They circulate annually "various modifications of palpable imposture, impudent mendacity, vulgar ignorance, and low obscenity." They exert their corporate influence to check "the growing intelligence of the people." Their Almanacs have continued "wholly unchanged, precisely of the same character that they held in the days when witches were burnt, and horoscopes were drawn." They have "bought up other Almanacs, and insinuated their own poison" into them. They "propagate the most filthy abominations." "Their Almanacs are altogether so bad, that the individuals composing this body ought to feel that some portion of the public indignation attaches to them personally." They have "prostituted their authority and influence to the most degrading purposes." They keep alive the memory of former events "for the purpose of exciting religious animosity."

The Advertisement then proceeds to state, that 'these charges are distorted, illiberal, unjust, and calumnious.' We reply, ARE THEY FALSE? We will go over our proofs, taking the charges, one by one: and then we will answer as to publishing names.

We accuse the Stationers' Company, that they circulate annually 'various modifications of palpable imposture, impudent mendacity, vulgar ignorance, and low obscenity.' In proof of the imposture and the mendacity, we produce 'Moore's Almanac,' 'Moore's Improved Almanac,' 'Partridge's Merlinus Liberatus,' and 'Season on Seasons'; and we say, that the astrological predictions in these books, (which are circulated to the extent of five times the quantity of all the other Almanacs of the kingdom put together,) are impostures and falsehoods—that the Company know them to be impostures and falsehoods—that not a member of that Company would not consider himself personally disgraced, if he were suspected of believing a particle of these predictions—and that, in spite of this, as we shall presently show, the Company dare to call on the Most High God, 'the fountain of all wisdom,' to confirm these monstrous falsehoods. We open 'Vox Stellarum; or a Loyal Almanac, for the year of human redemption, 1828,' (an Almanac that annually circulates nearly half a million of copies,) and we transcribe from p. 43, with the same shuddering that a witness in a court of justice relates some tremendous enormity, the following most atrocious passage:

'Judicium Astrologicum, pro Anno 1828.

'VOX CÆLORUM, VOX DEI: The Voice of the Heavens is the Voice of GOD.—HE speaketh in all the Changes of the Seasons, and of the Times.

'COURTEOUS READER,

'Let there be Lights in the firmaments of the heaven, to divide the day from the night: and let them be for Signs, and for Seasons, and for Days and Years,—imports no more than, that by their motions and different phases they become Heavenly Regulators, as it were, of remarkable measures of time; and their being appointed for Signs, must be understood as a distinct office from the rest, and so the prophet Jeremiah seems to understand them, when he calls the Stars the Signs of Heaven. Luther, in his comment upon Moses's words, Let them be for Signs, affirms that the Moon, with the Sun and Stars, were placed in the firmament of heaven for signs of state events, as experience teaches us in Eclipses, great Conjunctions, Comets, &c. Also Philo, that learned Jew, who was well acquainted with the Apostles St. Peter and St. Mark, in his exposition of these words of Moses, Let them be for Signs, asserts, that they may be considered signs of future events. They, (the Lights in the firmament,) he observes, were created, not only that they might fill the world with their light, but also, that they might be for Signs of future things. For by their Rising, Setting, Occultations, and other circumstances connected with their motions, they teach men to form conjectures of the events of future contingencies: as, of Plenty and Scarcity; of clear Weather and Storms; of Calms and Winds; of great Rains and of Drought; of the Changes of the Times, &c. &c. Yea, by these, it is said, some have foretold when there will be a shaking or trembling of the Earth, with infinite other things that have been known to come to pass, inasmuch that it may be truly said, the Stars were appointed for Signs and Seasons.'

The first words that are here invoked are those which are uttered by the Creator of the world, in the Book of Genesis.* The Prophet Jeremiah is called upon to

* Let any one should imagine that these words are capable of being wrested to a vindication of astrological falsehoods, we quote the sensible commentary of Bishop Hall: The Lights in the firmament were 'to be certain and natural signs for man's direction in his course of judgment and practice, for sowing, planting, sailing, and such other common affairs.'

* The writer of this article may be allowed to mention, that the subject is not new to him. His attention has been so constantly directed to the absurdities of the popular Almanacs, that, in 1814, and again in 1821, he published Remarks on the Almanacs of those years, holding up their astrology to public ridicule.

give an interpretation to these words; the companion of St. Peter and St. Mark is required to afford a similar testimony; and the great leader of the Reformation is made to depose to the same opinion. And what is this interpretation of the words which Moses attributes to the Author of all things—to the God of Truth? It is, that *judicial astrology* is proclaimed, by the *Divine Being*, as a guide for the actions of his creatures; that this great and wise Creator has said, that by the stars men may learn *to form conjectures of the events of future contingencies*, and *of the changes of the times*; and that 'by these some have foretold when there will be a shaking or trembling of the earth.' We repeat, that those who publish these things, *know and believe them to be falsehoods*; and yet, so knowing and believing, they call upon the highest authority to which man can appeal, for the purpose of sanctioning a deliberate, printed, *LIE*! Is this, or is this not, one of the most daring examples of that crime for which the Corporation of London lately instituted a prosecution, how wisely, we will not say? Is it, or is it not, *BLASPHEMY*?*

Even the painful and revolting accusation of blasphemy is not exhausted by one passage. In 'The Hieroglyphical Figure' in Moore, of a Life-Guardsman riding on a bull, driving before him some cowed monks, bearing a crucifix, is a banner inscribed with the words 'ECCE HOMO.' We ask, can infidelity the most daring go farther, than thus to associate one of the names of the Redeemer with such a gross, intolerant, and ribald caricature, the merciful and Christian meaning of which, if it mean any thing, is, that Catholicism is to be destroyed by the power of the sword?

And this is Moore's Almanac!—the great milch-cow of those in modern times, who 'converse with spirits and celestial signs, the bull, the ram, and the goat.' But then Moore has 'the best account of eclipses' to compensate for the mischief he does to the people. We dare say these accounts are very curious; but it is somewhat unnecessary that the English public should this year be informed minutely of the matter, seeing that the two eclipses for 1828 are *not visible in Europe*!

Shall we give additional examples of the 'vulgar ignorance' with which we charge the popular Almanacs of the Stationers' Company? We select an astrological passage from John Partridge, 'The Horrid Popish-Jacobite-Plot-man':

"Mercury seems very active this month; at one time he is moving backwards, then again forwards, and sometimes standing still. He is, besides, very ill disposed; and, therefore, reader, I would have you take care of the mighty desperado, who may stop you on the highway, and rob you of both your property and life."

This is a specimen of the 'conjectures of the events of future contingencies, which the God of Moses is called upon to confirm.

Of the 'low obscenity,' we have no disposition to offer any proof beyond the admission of the Stationers' Company themselves, in the Advertisement of their agent. He says:

"I have no desire to defend 'Poor Robin's Almanac,' but, strongly as I disapprove it, I may venture to say that it is not so immoral and obscene as he represents it to be. It abounds in doggerel rhyme, and in numerous attempts, often unsuccessful, at low wit. Its author often violates the rules of decency, according to my conception of them, but I will engage to select more examples of decided obscenity, and of positive and deliberate immorality, penned by 'the delicate white hand' of Lord Byron, than you can extract from 'Poor Robin's Almanac' for forty years past. I can tell you, too, that the *Stock Board* of the Stationers' Company have repeatedly directed the author of that Almanac to abstain from all indecent allusions; and that it has, more than once, been a matter of discussion, whether or not they would not recommend the discontinuance of the Almanac itself."

So, because Lord Byron is obscene, Poor Robin may be obscene also. Poor Robin is not so obscene as he is represented to be, and he is not so obscene as Lord Byron. We shall be obliged by an account, for our Scientific Report, of the *obscenity-meter*, by which the 'Stock Board' of the Company are enabled so curiously to appon the measures of indecency. But mark the admission! It has been alleged, in excuse for the Company, that they 'may not have closely and cautiously examined the productions of the agents whom they employ.' This might have been possible. But 'the Stock Board of the Stationers' Company have repeatedly directed the author of Poor Robin's Almanac to abstain from all indecent allusions.' Inconceivable dog! he would go on in spite of their warnings. The epoch of his reformation is not yet written in the stars. Amongst

the 'events of future contingencies,' the 'Stock Board' have not found that Robin can yet overcome his irresistible disposition to indite improprieties, nor they to publish them. Mercury is still in the fourth house of both their destinies. The fiery Trigon is lord of the ascendant. The 'Stock Board,' repeatedly discussing the propriety of discontinuing 'Poor Robin,' and as surely yielding to a superior influence, are living and fearful examples of the impossibility of struggling with the stars. Probably, 'by the help of excellent glasses,' they may discover a conjunction that may enable them to escape from this malign aspect.

To be serious. The Stationers' Company, in their defence, have let out the whole secret of their persisting to insult and degrade the people of England, as they have continued to do from the days of Lilly. Let us hear their excuse for every abomination:

"That you may learn how inflexibly the vulgar resist an infringement upon their tastes, allow me to inform you, that about thirty years ago, the Stationers' Company, at the recommendation of Dr. Hutton, printed and attempted to circulate *Wing's Sheet Almanac*, without this appendage of 'the dominion of the moon over man's body.' The result was, that their copies were returned simultaneously from the booksellers in every part of the kingdom; and they were compelled to print a new edition, in which head, face, neck, arms, throat, &c. was each assigned its appropriate place."

The *Stock Board* have, within the last six months, discussed the propriety of repeating the experiment, which it is probable, therefore, will be tried afresh next year.

The Stationers' Company were recommended by Dr. Hutton, thirty years ago, to leave out a filthy print which they still circulate in 'Wing's Sheet Almanac' and in 'Poor Robin.' They did so; but their copies were returned, and they were compelled to publish a new edition with the print. What compelled them? The detestable love of gain, which required them to pander to any appetite, however gross, or to any prejudice, however disgraceful, in spite of the remonstrances of Dr. Hutton, and their own conviction of what was dignified and decent. It is perfectly astonishing how Corporations have the impudence to avow those acts, which individuals would count their greatest shame. Tell such a thing of any private bookseller, and he would lose every respectable customer. The Stationers' Company tell it of themselves, without a blush. There is a demand for indecency, and the Stationers' Company supply it; there is a demand for lying predictions, and the Stationers' Company manufacture them; there is a demand for blasphemy, and even that is not to be stinted. 'The vulgar resist an infringement upon their tastes.' We may lament the morbid appetites of the people, but let us not blame the Stationers' Company. So says their Advertisement. The impudence of the avowal is almost sublime. They have so long treated the people of England as brute beasts, that their very defence breathes the same contempt for their understandings. But note their consideration. Seeing the people have made some progress in intellectual advancement during thirty years, they have 'discussed the propriety' of again trying whether they will do without an indecent picture—to leave out indecent words will be another experiment.

But the Stationers' Company have always invited suggestions for the improvement of their respective Almanacs; the changes are usually introduced gradually, BY WAY OF EXPERIMENT. They are, like Falstaff's repentance, 'made at idle times,' and, if they prove not unprofitable, they are continued:

"Here Wisdom calls, 'Seek Virtue first, be bold! As good to silver, Virtue is to gold.' There, London's wits, 'O' my dear, my dear, my dear, And then let VIRTUE FOLLOW—if she will."

Let us see the nature of their changes. They have diminished two pages of the portion usually devoted to predictions in Partridge's Almanac; and have substituted for them fuller information respecting transfers at the Bank. But they have substituted something more. Pages 42, 43, 44, and 45, (four pages) of Partridge's Almanac for 1828, being the 150th from the horrid Popish-Jacobite Plot, are occupied (instead of Judaea), with 'the horoscope, directional arcs, and judgment, relative to a very interesting activity of a child, now living, who was born at Epping, September 3, 1823, at 8 minutes after 8 o'clock in the morning, mean solar time.' And yet we were 'unjust, illiberal, calum-

nous,' in affirming that Almanacs have now 'precisely the same character as in the days when a witch was burnt,' the 'Worshipful Company do nothing to check the growing intelligence of the people;—they have not prostituted their authority and influence to the most degrading purposes.' Little did we know, my dear friends. Again, with regard to the 'intolerance,' with which we have so unjustly accused their productions. To say nothing of the Hieroglyphic in Moore, perhaps the Company would explain the passage about the 'Papist Clergy,' in page 48 of 'Partridge,' to have no intention of 'exciting religious animosity.' Their loyalty (though Moore is the 'Loyal Almanac') may be a little puzzled also to interpret the following paragraph in 'Partridge,' p. 47.

"Ireland is very uneasy, and Spain is apprehensive of some approaching danger; and indeed it requires no conjecture to tell the cause of this, EITHER IN THE ONE CASE OR THE OTHER, Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi."

—When doing Monarchs urge Unsound resolves, their subjects feel the scourge."

We apprehend we have now, in some degree, made out, if we had failed to do it before, that the Almanacs of the Stationers' Company are so bad, (in using the word *altogether*, we had in view the popular Almanacs,) 'that the individuals composing that body ought to feel that some portion of the public indignation attaches to them personally.' We repeat this; and what is more, until the Company's Almanacs are reformed, purified of their grossness, and kept, in some little degree, upon a par with the progress of intelligence, we will print, from year to year, the names of those in authority. We hate personality as much as the Stationers' Company can hate it; but individuals, who have duties to perform, ought not to shrink behind their corporate cloak when they act disgracefully. We venture to hope that a repetition of the names of 'the Court,' will be unnecessary. If 'Poor Robin' is not discontinued, we shall have no more obscenity; if Moore ceases not to prophesy, he will cease to blaspheme. Why will this be? Not because the Company fear us; but because the Aldermen of London, the King's printer, and the bookseller to the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, will feel that they have become responsible to the TRIBUNAL OF PUBLIC OPINION, for permitting enormities to exist that they have power to crush and to uproot.

One word as to the Company 'buying up Almanacs,' and then degrading them to the level of their own productions. Of the incorrectness of this charge, they say they will not occupy time and space in producing proofs. It is very suspicious when men, who occupy time and space in every possible way, do not think that proofs have any business to form part of their occupation. We repeat our former assertion about Moore's Almanac Improved and Mr. Willis.

But we must come, however tardily, to the main defence of the Company in their Advertisement; and they, perhaps, would have been thankful to us if we had entirely passed it over. It is this. That they publish nearly thirty Almanacs; that some of them are wholly of a scientific nature; that others are professional; that some are harmless; that only four or five are either indecent or full of astrological predictions; and that if these are the most extensively sold, they cannot help it. 'Lucris bonus odor ex se quibet.' We have their list before us; and we thus analyze it:

Scientific.—Total Sale about 50,000.
White's Ephemeris—Astronomical. 4,000.
The Gentleman's Diary. Mathematical. 4,000.
The Ladies' Diary. 4,000.
PROFESSIONAL.—Total Sale about 3,500.
Clerical Almanac. 3,500.
The Stationers' Annual Calendar. 3,500.
SHEET ALMANACS—wholly for business.
Eight County. 50,000.
Stationers'. 50,000.
Wing's Sheet. 50,000.
London Sheet. 50,000.
FOR POCKET-BOOKS—harmless.
Rider's British Merlin. 50,000.
Goldsmith. 50,000.
POPULAR AND ASTROLOGICAL; OR OBSCURE.
Moore's Almanac. 50,000.
Moore's Improved Almanac. 50,000.
John Partridge's Almanac. 50,000.
Poor Robin's Almanac. 50,000.
Season on the Seasons. 50,000.

We have some general knowledge of the trade in Almanacs, and we believe that our calculations are not very wide of the reality. How then stands the charge against the Stationers' Company? We accuse them of printing abominations, and checking the intelligence of the people. They admit the charge in part; but reply, 'this is only in four of our productions; but we publish nearly thirty. The fallacy is obvious. Their scientific and professional Almanacs are as limited in sale as their popular ones are most extensive. We do not accuse them of

* The Divine Being, who is thus invoked, is usually called 'The Giver of Life.' In Partridge's Almanac for 1828, p. 44, it is twice stated, in terms, that 'the MOON is the Giver of Life.' This is Worshipful theology!!!

corrupting the people through 'White's Ephemeris,' or the 'Clergyman's Calendar,' the peculiar, but very common merits of which we are quite ready to acknowledge; but we accuse them of doing so by 'Moore,' 'Partridge,' and 'Poor Robin.' We accuse them of publishing a great stream of popular information; and they answer, 'but see the nice clean little wells we have for the refined and learned classes; if they will but drink!' The Stationers' Company circulate 100,000 harmless books or sheets, and nearly half a million of noxious ones; and their sin is thus greater than even if they erred wholly in ignorance. The empiric who vends his infallible pill is not less an empiric, because he has bark and rhubarb for those who are wise enough to have the nostrum.

If the 'Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge' (to imagine a monstrous proposition) had chosen to publish an Astrological Almanac, or an indecent Almanac, instead of a rational, moral, and useful Almanac, but one which they thought would meet the 'morbid taste' of the people, as Moore and Poor Robin do, and sell, they might have been expected to answer to such a charge as the Company of Stationers answer. It is true, but then we also publish 'useful' treatises. The Stationers' Company say in their Advertisement, that 'in the year 1705, that is, 123 years ago, if not before, the Stationers' Company assumed the character, though they did not adopt the name, of a 'Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge'; and that in this character they published the 'Ladies' Diary,' and afterwards the 'Gentleman's Diary.' The scientific world is obliged to them. But, unfortunately, after the lapse of 123 years, this ancient and original Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge is found also to publish and sell, and to derive their chief profits from publishing and selling 'the blasphemy of Moore,' and the beastliness of 'Poor Robin.' It is probable, judging from the corruption of the venerable Society in Ludgate Street, that the modern Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge may, at some distant period, fall into the same errors; and that in the year 1950 they may be found varying their proflusions by some *reficamento* of the atheism of 'Les Trois Imposteurs,' or of the indecencies of 'La Pucelle.' If so, we trust that a new Athenæum may arise to hurl that Society to the merited contempt of the English people, to which we now consign the ancient Society, commonly called 'the Stationers' Company.'

NOTE OF THE EDITOR.

After confirming the statement made by the writer of this article, that it was written in compliance with my own desire on seeing the 'British Almanac,' and comparing it with those of the Stationers' Company, I may add, that the whole of his first and second article had my entire concurrence, as containing nothing which I did not heartily approve; I therefore willingly share with the writer whatever responsibility attaches to the strictures.

In reply to a question with which VINEX closes his Apology for the Stationers' Company in 'The Times' of Friday the 11th instant, calling upon me to state, whether I, or any of my agents, sent a certain paragraph as an Advertisement to 'The Morning Chronicle' of Saturday the 8th instant: I beg to answer distinctly, that I had myself no knowledge of the paragraph till then called to my attention; but find, on inquiry, that it was inserted by a party connected with the Paper—and that the sum paid for it was half-a-guinea. It merely stated, that the Article on the Almanacs, contained in 'THE ATHENÆUM,' had excited the wrath of the Stationers' Company. VINEX, however, says 'they do not feel the wrath there imputed to them.' He seems to be very intimate with all the members of the Corporation to vouch for the absence of anger in the breast of each. But I have been assured from the authority of an eye-witness, that such was the feeling of the officers of Stationers' Hall, on the appearance of this article in 'THE ATHENÆUM,' that the copy of No. 1, which contained it, was placed on the floor for the purpose of being literally kicked out of the door! This is an easy way of disproving an accusation, certainly; whether it be a disguised one or not the Public will judge; but it must have required some little 'wrath' somewhere, before such a measure as this could have been resorted to.

And now that I have answered VINEX so explicitly on the subject of the Advertisement sent to 'The Morning Chronicle,' and the price paid for it, I beg to ask him, as distinctly, whether his Letter was not also sent to 'The Times' as an Advertisement, and what was the sum paid for inserting it? In his own language, I would say, 'Do not hesitate about answering it, for the exposure, if complete, will do much good.' That it was inserted as an Advertisement 'The Times' itself states; and the sum paid for it may be inferred to be nearer one hundred guineas than half-a-guinea; as for my own short letter in 'The Times' of Tuesday, the 15th inst., containing thirty-four lines, the sum paid was four guineas; and if no undue favour has been shown to the Worshipful Company, their Apology, by VINEX, extending to nearly six hundred lines, must have cost them, at the same rate, between seventy and eighty guineas; which their funds will scarcely feel. As VINEX, however, is such a friend of publicity and plain dealing, and as I have answered him on questions explicitly, under my own hand, I trust he will show that he is not ashamed of the cause he defends with so much zeal, by answering me with the same frankness, and in his own name, also, that the Public may know, in matters of fact, the nature of the authority upon which they are called on to rely for the accuracy of the evidence submitted, and on which their decision is to be made.

J. B. BUCKINGHAM.

THE DRAMA.

OPENING OF THE ITALIAN OPERA.

THE Opera season commenced at the King's Theatre last Saturday evening, with 'Margherita d'Anjou,' a melodrama in two acts, the music by Meyerbeer; why it should not be called an opera we are at a loss to understand, seeing that it is throughout an uninterrupted series of music in symphony, recitative, and song.

Of its particular merits, we are fearful of speaking decidedly on a first hearing; but our impression is, that although not very novel in its melodies and harmonies, it is, as a whole, a very pleasing composition, and an earnest of that decided superiority which talent and genius can alone attain to by study and experience.

The scene is laid on the Scotch frontier; where Margaret, the widow of Henry the Sixth, with her young son Edward, disguised as peasants, is discovered, and falls into the power of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, from whom they are, by dramatic artifice, most opportunely and happily rescued. The game of hide and seek always affords ample scope for the poet; and we think, in the present instance, it has been applied to create an interest and situations for producing musical effect, which the composer has used to good advantage.

The overture and the first scena did not give earnest of the excellence that succeeds in the second, where Madame Caradori, as Margaret, sang, with infinite pathos, the beautiful and finely composed scena, commencing, 'Miei fedeli.' This scena, together with the whole of the last of the first act, impressed us most strongly with the genius of the composer.

The chorus of mountaineers, in the fourth scene of the second act, commencing, 'Che bell'alba!' is very pleasing and effective. Margaret's scena in the cottage, 'Dolci alberghi di pace,' was most delightfully sung.

There is a lady, Isaura, who, disguised as Eugenio, follows her husband, the Duke de Lavarenne, attended by Michele, a droll French surgeon. The Duke being most heroically in love with the royal widow, causes much affliction to his attached wife, who ultimately wins him again to herself;—this part was personated by Mademoiselle Brambilla, who, throughout the piece, sung with a simplicity, which greatly enhanced the interest of her situation. Curioni played the Duke, and he sang like a hero. Pellegrini, an artist with a most unmusical lisp, attempted to be droll as the 'Chirurgo Francese'; his song describing the varied occupations of his life, might have obtained him an encore, had he given it with half the spirit with which it is written.

We cannot close our first notice of this opera, without according our unqualified praise to Mr. Bochsa, for the labour and skill he must have devoted to attain the accuracy displayed by both vocal and instrumental performers. We never saw so perfect a first representation.

EVERY Art has its nomenclature, or technical language, and this is of course the case with the Drama, but more particularly with that great theatrical combination of the Fine Arts, which we call THE OPERA. Some of the terms used in its birth-place, Italy, have followed it here; but they are not yet all naturalized amongst us, nor does their right application appear to be always understood by those who use them. The following list is collected from Italian journals, musical works having reference to the Opera, and the writings of intelligent travellers. As the interest which belongs to the subject cannot fail to be enhanced at the present moment, when the Opera season has just commenced, we apprehend that the article will prove acceptable to our musical and fashionable readers. It will readily be observed, that few of the terms are to be found in the dictionaries, in the sense here given to them, and that the list will, therefore, be found a useful companion in

the perusal of works of criticism relating to the Opera, or which treat incidentally of that elegant species of dramatic entertainment.

Pezzo che ferma.—This phrase is employed to designate the principal or most admired composition in an opera. In Italy, an opera is not considered as a dramatic whole, in action, poetry, and music. If the second act be liked better than the first, nothing is more common than to make it the commencement of the entertainment, so that the first act becomes the second in the performance. By this arrangement, those who choose it, may return home after hearing the best portion of the opera, and seeing the ballet, which is given between the two acts. If there be but one attractive composition in an opera, and all the rest be worth little or nothing, the piece will still be endured in Italy. During the performance of such an opera, the spectators walk about, conversing aloud with each other, and visiting their friends in the boxes, the occupants of which are frequently engaged at cards, or even at supper. At length comes the *pezzo che ferma*. All heads are thrust out of the boxes. The piece is listened to attentively, applauded vehemently; and when it is ended, the chief part of the audience quit the theatre.

Sometimes an Italian opera contains two, but rarely three pieces of this kind. The composers of the present day never fail to introduce such compositions into their works, for an Italian audience is no more than an English one inclined to listen patiently to an opera from beginning to end; and, strange as it may appear, this is particularly the case among the higher classes. To afford an idea of the compositions which, in Italy, are styled *pezzi che fermano*, we may cite some examples from the well known opera of 'Don Giovanni.' These are the duo, *La ci darem*; the terzetto in the finale of the first act, *Proteggila il giusto ciel*; the duo, *O stutua gentilissima*; and the ghost scene at the close of the second act. During the last years of the Venetian Republic, operas were performed in every town in Venice, and people of rank used to spend the whole of the evening, rowing about in their gondolas from one theatre to another, so as to be in time to hear the *pezzo che ferma* of every opera. Productions of this kind are, no doubt, often found to be very indifferent, when they come to be strictly analysed; but they are always remarkable for some striking quality.

Impressario.—Theatrical manager. **Impressa del teatro.**—The management of the theatre.

Suggeritore.—Prompter.

Scrittura.—The contract concluded between the manager and the composer, singer, &c.

Comica is used in the sense of action. *Il tenore canta bene, ma non ha comica*: the tenor sings well, but he has no action.

Recita.—Performance. The first recita usually determines the fate of an opera; that is to say, the audience determine whether the music is of a nature suitable to Italian ears. It is always desirable to attend a *prima recita* in Italy, that being almost the only occasion on which an opera can be heard in silence, and in its complete form; for on succeeding representations, it almost invariably happens that many portions of the piece are curtailed, or entirely omitted.

Estero.—Musical fancy or invention. *Questo maestro ha molto estero, o non ha estero*. A musical composer will frequently say, *Oggi non posso far niente, non ho estero*. (I can do nothing to-day—I have no ideas.)

Tarantella.—Trivial common-place music; mere tinkling sound.

Maestro consumato.—A very skilful and learned dramatic composer, who has produced many good operas. Besides possessing great talent, a composer must also be somewhat advanced in years before he can obtain in Italy the honourable title of *Maestro consumato*.

Brudo lungo.—(Watery broth.) A term of contempt applied to very insipid music.

Musica robusta.—German music is frequently so called by the Italians, because it is remarkable for its bold and rich harmonies.

Incontrare.—In the musical language of Italy this word signifies to obtain success. For example, *L'opera ha avuto grand incontro.* (The opera has been very well received.)

La Stretta.—The Italians, by this term, distinguish the concluding allegro movement of any long piece of music. The finale of an introduction, a quartet, or a quintet, is also called the *Stretta*.

L'Autunnino.—The theatres of Italy are, like our own, open only during certain seasons, or, to use the Italian term, *Stagioni*; and at each of these intervals a new set of singers is usually engaged. The *Stagione teatrale nell'autunno*, properly terminates at the end of November; but if it be continued till Christmas, it is called *l'autunnino*.

Far il Carnivale.—**Far la primavera.**—These phrases are used by the Italian singers in the sense of theatrical engagements. For example: *Farò il carnevale à Parma.* 'I am engaged for the carnival at Parma.'

Far furore.—**L'opera fece furore.**—Means that the opera was received with extraordinary and, if the term may be used, furious approbation.

Far fiasco.—This expression is used in conversation in a general way, and does not exclusively belong to the phraseology of the opera. A person is said to *far fiasco* when he fails in any undertaking.

L'opera fece fiasco. does not always signify that the opera was absolutely hissed, but also that it was coldly received.

Esser fischiate, on the contrary, means decidedly hissed, which is also expressed by *far un fiascone*.

Farà quel che potrà.—In Italy, when a singer is taken ill, a little board is fixed up at the entrance of the theatre, with the following inscription: *Per indisposizione, or per abbassamento di voce della signora — farà quel che potrà.* That is to say, she will do what she can.

Buffo.—This term is, of course, too generally understood to require explanation. But it may be observed, that the comic performers of the Italian opera are divided into several classes. The *buffo comico*, or *caricato*, is properly a comic actor, and is not necessarily distinguished as a singer. The *buffo cantante*, on the other hand, must be a good singer. *Due buffi a vicenda, a perfetta vicenda*, signifies two comic performers, whose cast of character is precisely alike. The expressions, *buffo caricato assoluto, buffo a parte uguale, buffo con la scelta della parte*, &c., are employed in different theatres, according to the arrangements entered into between the managers and performers.

Musica di piazza, or, in common conversation, *una piazzata*, is that vulgar noisy kind of music which is played by itinerant musicians in the streets in Italy. *La musica di questa opera è una vera piazzata*, is said, when the music of an opera contains nothing but vulgar common-place melodies.

Miserere, mortorio, piangistero.—All these terms are applied derisively, by the Italians, to dramatic music of a very doleful and serious character. Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, though now a favourite in Italy, was, on its first appearance in Milan, pronounced by the critics to be *un continuo miserere; un continuo mortorio; un continuo piangistero*.

Musichetta.—This diminutive of *musica* is used to describe light, trivial, but not displeasing, music.

Orecchianti (from *orecchio*, ear) is a term applied to people who are insensible to the beauties of any other kind of music than that which merely tickles the ear.

Articoli di teatro.—Articles of dramatic criticism inserted in the journals. In Italy, as well as in England, the criticisms on the Opera are for the

most part written by men who have not the least knowledge of music, and whose opinions are dictated solely by their taste, be it good or bad. Hence it happens, that the musical criticisms in the Italian journals are of the most superficial kind; and the only information they contain is, whether an opera was well or ill received, or whether this or that singer was applauded or hissed.

Aria.—The Italians apply this term not only to opera airs, but also to those compositions which are brought into the ballet, not for the dancing, but to accompany the pantomime action. For example, *Il ballo presente, ha alcune bellissime arie.* (The ballet now performing contains some very beautiful airs.)

Balabile, the dances in the ballet.

Compositore del ballo, is not the composer of the music, but the ballet-master.

Abbonamento—Gli abbonati.—Subscription—subscribers. In the towns of Italy, the opera is supported by subscription in the same manner as in London. But it must not be supposed, that in those places opera subscriptions amount to any thing like the exorbitant rate at which they are fixed in England. On the contrary, the Italians have the advantage of enjoying their favourite amusement, and of hearing the best singers in the world, at a very trifling expense. In Italy, the *abbonati* never fail to attend the first performance of a new opera. If, on account of the indisposition of some of the principal singers, no performance should take place on a regular opera night, the piece is played on a Friday, which is otherwise a holiday for the singers. This arrangement secures to the subscribers their full allowance of entertainment for their money.

Supplemento.—Substitute. The principal singers of all the great Italian operas have their substitutes, who sing for them in the *pezzi concertati*. These *supplementi* are usually very indifferent singers. The principal dancers, too, sometimes have their substitutes.

Andar a terra.—*L'opera è andata a terra.* The opera totally failed.

Maestro di cartello.—A composer of high reputation.

Musico.—A male soprano. For musician, the Italians use the terms, *Professore, Dilettante, or Virtuoso di musica.*

Ira di Dio, is said of a musical composition which is so very bad as to be distressing to the ear. The phrase is also used in speaking of bad singers.

Broccolo.—A term of ridicule given by the Italians to the husband of a *prima donna*. We know not what covert meaning is attached to this slang term; but it may, perhaps, be rendered into English by *Signor Cabbage-head*.

Arie di baule, (trunk-airs.)—Those favourite songs which singers carry about from place to place, in their trunks and portmanteaus. All the Italian singers, male and female, have their *arie di baule*, which they introduce into every opera, and in every town in which they perform. This practice, which is so justly complained of by some of our English critics, is not less common in Italy than here.

Musica filosofica.—Music of a very scientific character is so called by the Italians; and their ignorant would-be critics apply the term derisively to the works of the ablest German composers. But what may be styled learned music is not always ineffective, even on the Italian stage, for when 'La Clemenza di Tito' was represented some time ago at the opera of Milan, the audience, during several parts of the performance, exclaimed, in a tone of rapturous admiration, 'Che filosofia!'

Ballo—Balletta.—In most of the great towns of Italy, the grand ballet, or *ballo*, is performed between the two acts of the opera, and the entertainments conclude with the little ballet, or *balletta*.

Voce bianca.—The common term for a soprano voice in Italy.

Cartellone—Cartello.—The *Cartellone* is a large play-bill, announcing all the performances of a *Stagione*, or perhaps some shorter interval, as, for example, a month. The *Cartellone* not only enumerates the pieces to be represented, but also gives the names of all the singers, dancers, and actors, and performers in the orchestra, together with the terms of subscription, and the prices of admission for the public. The *Cartello* is a smaller bill, which merely announces the entertainments of the evening.

Libretto.—Properly the text to which the composer adapts his music. The term is also used for the opera-book, like that which is sold in London. An Italian opera-book, besides giving the names of the singers, the composer, the principal performers in the orchestra, the conductor of the choruses, &c., contains a list of the whole *personnel* of the opera establishment, down to the music copyer, the contriver of the dresses, the theatrical tailor, and even the person who superintends the lighting of the theatre. In the Milan opera-book, this list usually occupies five pages.

SKETCHES OF SOCIETY AND MANNERS.

We find that the article in our last, under the head of 'German Novels,' has been misunderstood by part of our readers, chiefly on account of that title, which, however, was prefixed to it merely because the collection of stories then before us happened to be in the German language, but which certainly did not at all express the object we had in view. It seems to be supposed by some that our plan is to load the columns of 'THE ATHENÆUM' with translations of German romances; and as the specimens of that description of work which have already been offered to the British public have not been well received, it is not surprising that those who mistake our intention should be alarmed at the idea of the strange flights and sentimental absurdities of a justly condemned style being made to occupy that space which they have a right to expect should be devoted to matters of a more agreeable or instructive nature. We thought we had said enough to obviate this impression; and we now repeat that what we propose is, to give *Pictures of National Manners*, through the medium of Novelettes, of the respective countries of Europe. These pieces may be descriptive of certain states of society in foreign countries or in the British dominions; but what we consider very desirable is, that they should be written by natives of the country in which the scene of the story is laid. How happily have the national manners of Scotland and Ireland been incidentally illustrated by tales! The same source of entertainment and instruction is open to our Journal; and to correspondents in these and other parts of this great empire, we look forward for pictures of home society, which, we expect, will to many of our readers prove more interesting than those of foreign.

After what has been said, it will be evident that our plan has nothing to do with the mystic or the romantic of Teutonic literature; and that there is no foundation for the supposition that we meant to select our specimens exclusively from the German market. On the contrary, it is our intention to resort also to the Italian, the Spanish, and to all the languages of the south and the north of Europe, in search of prose fictions suited to our purpose. The difficulty is to find stories at once applicable to our plan, and compressible within the space to which we must confine them. It is obvious that we cannot afford much room for the gradual development of character, and that we must avoid minute details of every kind. But as our mirror is not very comprehensive, as it is not sufficiently capacious to receive all the traits we could wish to reach it, we are anxious that those which it may reflect shall be genuine, and form a picture true to nature, though in miniature,

THE FINE ARTS.

ARCHITECTURAL ANTIQUITIES OF NORMANDY.

Pugin and Le Keux's Specimens of the Architectural Antiquities of Normandy. The subjects selected, measured, and drawn, by AUGUSTUS PUGIN, Architect, &c. Engraved by JOHN and HENRY LE KEUX. The Literary part by JOHN BRITTON, F.S.A. Four parts, royal 4to. Longman and Co.

BOTH the amateur and student of Gothic Architecture are under infinite obligations to Mr. Pugin. He has done more towards making its merits understood and appreciated than any author, antiquary, or artist, who have ever yet treated on the subject. He is the Stuart and Revett of the style. The famous work on Athens has not effected more for Greek architecture than his judicious and scientific labours have done for the Gothic. The treasures of the Acropolis were not less familiar when Stuart and Revett commenced their grand undertaking, than were to us the principles and science of the style which we call peculiarly our own, when Pugin began to develop them in his 'Specimens of Gothic Architecture.' If, since that time, our artists have applied themselves to a study which had before been most unaccountably neglected, it is but fair to attribute this salutary change in their pursuits to the taste with which the examples presented in the work we have referred to had inspired them, and to the knowledge which it had imparted; we must in justice, therefore, give its author some share of the credit of the very successful attempts at the application of Gothic architecture to sacred edifices, which have recently been made in various parts of the kingdom by several of our younger artists.

Estimating thus highly the former labours of M. Pugin, we have watched with satisfaction the appearance, in numbers, of his work on 'The Architectural Antiquities of Normandy,' in which he has been aided by such engravers as J. and H. Le Keux, and which is at length completed by the publication of the fourth and last number.

In this new work, we are at a loss whether most to admire the judgment of M. Pugin's selection, and the spirit, accuracy, and delicacy of his delineation, or the feeling and effect with which all these merits, and the character of the edifices, are caught and given by his coadjutors.

Each of the four numbers of the work contains twenty engravings in outline. The two first numbers are more attractive to the artist than to the amateur, since their contents are only parts of edifices, remarkable for some excellence or peculiarity. Among these, however, are many highly beautiful and interesting morsels. The circular window of the Church of St. Owen, at Rouen, for instance, given in the first number, is an exquisite example of tracery in a rose window; and the second number, among other treasures, presents in the Palais de Justice at Rouen, one of the most florid and picturesque specimens of Norman architecture now existing.

The two last numbers are more rich in perspective views, and consequently more interesting to the general admirer. We can hardly go too far, by saying, that they excel every work of the kind yet published.

The Frontispiece attached to the third number, and which presents a view of Caen through an arch of the church of the Grande Maladrerie, is a sweet composition, and does equal credit to the taste and skill of the delineator and the execution of the engraver. The perspective views, both interior and exterior, of the Abbaye aux Dames and Abbaye aux Hommes, are delightful. The Château Fontaine le Henri, near Caen, is wonderful for its picturesque effect. In the tower and spire of St. Peter's Church, at Caen, we have a surprising instance of lightness in construction. The view of the interior of Bayeux Cathedral is a perfect masterpiece of outline—of distinct, delicate, and expressive delineation.

The atmospheric and mysterious effect of distance given to this interior, and to that of the Church of St. Owen, is a remarkable exercise of the ingenuity of the engraver, in producing an astonishing effect by simple means. The small church at Than, near Caen, is in itself a perfect example of Norman architecture, and is given in most masterly style.

The selection, in short, is altogether most judicious; and as to the execution, whether we regard the labours of the delineator or of the engraver, we cannot imagine any thing more perfect. To the artist, outline engravings of this kind, finished by such hands as the Le Keux, and which give the details so clearly and distinctly, and with such effects of distance as those to which we have alluded, are invaluable.

The literary part of the work is postponed, in consequence of a serious accident which happened during the autumn to the Editor.

Christ tempted in the Wilderness.—The Ascent of Elijah. Drawn and engraved by JOHN MARTIN. Prowett, 1828.

CAN we give a higher praise to these clever engravings, than by avowing that they remind us at once of Salvador Rosa and Rembrandt? The wilderness of composition, more especially in the 'Temptation,' is quite in the style of Salvador, while the happy effect of chiaroscuro, the concentration of light in particular parts, forming powerful contrasts with the deep shadow of the general mass, recall to mind the most successful efforts of Rembrandt. Nor are these engravings wanting in the character of sublimity, which distinguishes the former works of Martin. Of the two, the 'Ascent' partakes more of his general style and variety of composition: the employment of lighting to illuminate the distant city, is extremely happy. The wilderness of the desert in the 'Temptation,' is awfully grand. The gnarled oak, Rosa himself could not have surpassed; while the effect of the light thrown upon the Saviour, is hardly excelled by any of the happiest attempts of Rembrandt.

VARIETIES.

DEFENCE OF PETRARCH FROM THE CHARGE OF PLAGIARISM.

Petrarch has been accused of plagiarisms from the Provençal and Limosin poets, and from the compositions of his master, the Valencian poet, Mosen Jordi,* he is said to have borrowed freely. His 105th sonnet, which commences with the following lines, has been quoted in support of this assertion:

Pace non trovo e non ho da dar guerra
E volo sopra 'l ciel e giaccio in terra,
E nulla stringo e tutto 'l mondo abbraccio,
Ed ho in odio me stesso ed amo altrui.
Si amor non è, che dunque è quel ch'io sento?

Among Mosen Jordi's poems, there is one which commences almost word for word like the above:

E non e pau, et non tinc quin guarraig,
Val sobrel cel, et non movi de terra,
E non estrench res e tot lo mon abraç;
Hoy he de mi, et vull altri opan hè,
Sino amor, dous asse que sera?

Benter, in his 'Cronica de Valencia,' dates the writings of Mosen Jordi about the year 1270, a circumstance which, if correct, would certainly exhibit Petrarch in the character of a plagiarist or a translator. But the learned Spanish author, Sanchez, in his 'Coleccion de poesias Castellanas anteriores al siglo quince,' satisfactorily proves, from the letter* of the celebrated Marquess of Santillana to the Constable of Portugal, on the origin of Castilian poetry, that Jordi lived at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries, and that, consequently, Petrarch is absolved from the charge of having copied from his compositions.

* In the Valencian and Catalonian dialects, Mosen is a title corresponding with Master, or Mister.

* An account of this letter is given in Bouterwek's 'History of Spanish Literature.'

NEW SPANISH PUBLICATION.

A publication, which is to appear in Paris, has been commenced at Madrid, under the title of 'Coleccion de las piezas dramaticas de los autores Espanoles.' This collection will, it is said, include the best works of the old Spanish dramatists, viz.: Lopez de Vega, Calderon, Moreto, Tirso de Molina, Rueda de Alarcon, and Perez de Montalban. Such a publication, under able superintendence, would doubtless prove a desirable acquisition to every lover of Spanish literature, but in the present enslaved state of the Press in Spain, it cannot certainly be possible to render any thing like justice to the undertaking.

REPRINT.

THE whole edition of 6250 copies of the two first Numbers of 'THE ATHENÆUM' having been sold off, both these Numbers are already out of print. A Second Edition of each is, however, now in the press, perfect copies of which will be ready for delivery to Booksellers, or News Agents, in ten days from the present date. It is especially requested that orders for copies required may be sent before that date; as the difficulty of re-printing a Third Edition, from its interfering with the current business of the office, (as was found in the case of the early Numbers of 'THE SPHYNX,') will not admit of its being done in the present instance.

January 15, 1828.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

'A Friend of Neglected Merit' is informed that Mr. Pennie's Volumes will receive due attention at the earliest opportunity. Y. Z. on Chinese Translations will appear.

WORKS IN THE PRESS.

A small volume, entitled 'Moments of Loneliness; or, Tales, Sketches, Essays, Reflections, &c., in Prose and Verse,' from Miss Sibella Elizabeth Hatfield, is printing, by subscription, in Cornwall. Price 5s. Miss Hatfield is known as the authoress of a very animated and spirit-stirring poem entitled, 'The Wanderer of Scandinavia,' and of many exquisite little pieces in the Annuals recently published, which give promise of merit and success in her present undertaking.

In the press, and speedily will appear, Longinus, a Tragedy, in five Acts.

Funeral of the Right Hon. George Canning; Lines to the Memory of Sir John Cox Hippisley, Bart., and other Poems. By Jacob Jones, Esq., of the Inner Temple, and formerly of Brazen Nose College, Oxford.

Mr. T. Hopkins, of Manchester, has nearly ready for publication, an Essay on Rent of Land, and its Influence on Subsistence and Population; with Observations on the operating causes of the present condition of the labouring classes in various countries.

NEWLY PUBLISHED BOOKS.

Chalmers on Literary and Ecclesiastical Endowments, 8vo., 6s.
Carpenter's Scripture Natural History, 8vo., 14s.
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Britton's Picture of London, 1828, 18mo., 6s.; with plates, 9s.
Illustrations of 'Friendship's Offering,' royal 4to., 14s.; Imperial 4to. proofs, 1l. 1s.
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WEEKLY METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL.

Hour of observation	January	Thermom. Mean Alt.	Winds.	Weather.	Cloud.
9 A.M.	Wed. 9	33° 2'	S.E.	Cloudy.	The Cirrus, Cirrostratus, altostratus, and nimbostratus, prevailed throughout the week.
	Thur. 10	30	E.	Serene.	
	Frid. 11	30	E.	Snow.	
	Sat. 12	36	Calm.	Moist haze.	
	Sun. 13	35	W. gale.	Cloudy.	
	Mon. 14	42	W.	Foggy.	
	Tues. 15	37	N.W.	Haze.	

Astronomical Observations.

On the 11th the Moon, Mars, and Saturn in conjunction.
On the 15th the Moon and Mercury in conjunction.
Ditto Mercury at his farthest distance from the Sun.
Ditto The Sun 24° 34' 3" in Capricorn.

The following interesting NEW WORKS will be published in the course of the PRESENT WEEK, by Mr. COLBURN, 5, New Burlington-street.

LORD BYRON and SOME of HIS CONTEMPORARIES. By LEIGH HUNT. 1 vol.
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No. II. will be published in March.

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Cette partie sert d'Appendice et de complément à la section des Analyses.

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